

Arab League assails Israel over Aqsa

CAIRO (AP) — The Arab League, marking the anniversary of an arson attack on Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, on Monday assailed Israel for continuing aggression against the shrine. "The crime of the burning of the Al Aqsa Mosque... was carried out by Israeli occupation forces," a league statement said. It added "Israel is continuing its aggressive policies against Al Aqsa Mosque, and its attempt to destroy it with the hands of Israeli terrorism and extremism is continuing." The league statement was especially critical of Israel's decision to dig a tunnel near the mosque and to allow Jews to visit the mosque area during Jewish holidays. Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, was severely damaged in an arson attack in 1994. It has since been largely restored. Muslims have long blamed Israel for the arson. But Israel claimed it was the work of a deranged Christian, who was detained and later deported.

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Suicide blast kills four in Jerusalem

Hamas claims responsibility for bomb attack believed to have been carried out by woman

Combined agency dispatches

A SUICIDE BOMBER, believed to be a woman from the Hamas movement, killed four people and wounded 100 in a morning rush hour bus attack in Jerusalem on Monday.

A Palestinian radio and an autonomous caller to Israel Radio said Hamas, which opposes the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, carried out the attack. There was no official confirmation of the claim.

Police said the body of an unidentified woman was found on the bus. Previous bombings have been male and security screening has focused on young single men.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin put on hold peace talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which condemned the bombing. Both sides said they were determined to sign an agreement on extending Palestinian self-rule to the West Bank on schedule in Washington next month.

"It was a difficult and painful day but we are determined to fight Hamas and Islamic Jihad terror and to continue building peace with Palestinians who want peace with us," Mr. Rabin told reporters. He said talks would resume after the funeral.

In a leaflet broadcast by the Syrian-based "Al Quds" Radio, the military wing of Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing and one carried out in Tel Aviv on July 24 in which six people

were killed.

"The government of the Zionist enemy will pay the price of the general war declared against Islam and Muslims," said the leaflet, referring to the crackdown on Hamas by Israel and PLO that followed earlier suicide attacks.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat denounced the bombing "strongly and completely" and called Mr. Rabin to express his condolences.

The blast exploded in the back of a No. 26 bus in the northern Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ramat Eshkol at 7:55 a.m., as it passed another bus. The explosion set fire to the second bus and blew out its windows. Passengers on both buses were among the wounded.

Ronen Shmuel, driver of the No. 26 bus, said most of his passengers were students travelling to Hebrew University's Mt. Scopus campus. Some were foreign students attending summer Hebrew language classes.

Judy Shulewitz, a 19-year-old Cornell University student from Philadelphia, said she was standing next to the back door of the bus when the bomb went off. She was cut by glass on her face, hands and knees.

"Suddenly there was an explosion," she said. "I felt very hot and I landed on the

(Continued on page 7)



A general view of the site of an explosion in Jerusalem that killed at least four people on Sunday (AFP photo)

Crown Prince, Princess Sarvath return home

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath returned to Amman Monday following a several-day visit to Europe. They were received at the airport by His Majesty King Hussein. Also present at the airport were Royal family members, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasbi and other officials in addition to the charge d'affaires of the French and Italian embassies in Jordan. Returning with the Prince and Princess were their Royal Highnesses Princess Rashed Ben Al Hassan and Princesses Rahmah and Badia Al Hassan.

Algerian held in Paris blast

PARIS (AFP) — The judge investigating the July 25 bombing of a Paris commuter train has questioned a suspected Algerian fundamentalist who is said to have been spotted at the scene of the blast, reliable sources said Monday. Judge Jean-Francois Ricard questioned Abdul Karim Denche in Sweden with the permission of Swedish authorities, the sources said. The sources said many news clippings of the July 25 blast at the Saint Michel station in the heart of the Latin Quarter were found at Mr. Denche's home in Sweden. The attack left seven people dead and more than 80 wounded. (see page 12).

Rockets fired at Israeli-held zone

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Hizbollah guerrillas on Monday fired Katyusha rockets at Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon, the group said. Hizbollah said its artillery "bombed an Israeli unit stationed near Markaba and hit it with full force," in a statement issued in Beirut.

Baghdad media denounce U.S. efforts to isolate Iraq

Party paper pays tribute to ties with Jordan

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq on Monday scoffed at U.S. efforts to isolate it from Jordan, its lifeline to the world since being placed under economic sanctions. "U.S. efforts to sabotage our relations with Jordan are sterile and ridiculous and nobody can believe that Iraq has massed troops on the border" with Jordan, the official newspaper Al Thawra said.

Washington has offered to protect Jordan military after Amman granted asylum to senior Iraqi officials and is reportedly trying to persuade Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to replace Iraq as a source of oil to Jordan (see page 12).

At Al Thawra, which is run by the ruling Baath Party, also said U.S. reports of a possible threat to Jordan amid "potentially challenging" troop movements inside

Iraq were "not credible." "No Jordanian can believe it," the newspaper said, adding Iraq would protect its long tradition of "brotherly and excellent relations" with Jordan.

"Iraq is always keen to develop its relations with Jordan because it is conscious that Washington wants to sow discord and sabotage inter-Arab relations," Al Thawra said.

Babel newspaper, run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, said the "war waged against Iraq in 1991 was not enough for the Americans. Now they want to starve the Iraqi people."

Baghdad has refrained from criticizing Amman for giving asylum on August 10 to former Iraqi Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan, his brother and their two

wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein.

At the weekend the Iraqi authorities went still further. "Iraq wants to preserve its relations with Jordan and hopes to develop and strengthen them to the greatest possible degree in all spheres," a government spokesman said Saturday after a cabinet meeting chaired by President Saddam to discuss Jordan.

"Any cooperation by Jordan with other brother Arab countries will not reduce Iraq's eagerness to strengthen its economic relations with Jordan," he added.

Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz told CNN in a televised interview Friday: "We still think of Jordan as a

(Continued on page 7)



The body of a woman hangs out of the window of the bus where a bomb exploded in Jerusalem on Sunday, killing at least four people (AFP photo)

Ekeus arrives for meeting with defector

U.N. official sees Iraq moving away from threats

By Ayman Al Safadi

AMMAN — A top United Nations arms inspector arrived here on Monday to meet with a former Iraqi minister in an obvious bid to secure more information about Iraq's clandestine weapons programme, and compare data he had received from Iraqi officials in Baghdad with details he hoped to obtain here.

However, there was no immediate word when Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission for disarming Iraq, was to meet Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan, a son-in-law of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and former minister of industry who defected to Jordan Aug. 8.

In comments to reporters, Mr. Ekeus, a Swedish diplomat, indicated that the meeting could come on Tuesday and said he could explain why the encounter did not take place as originally scheduled on Monday.

"I will not be able to tell you anything today, but I

hope tomorrow I will be able to give you more information," he said.

In Baghdad on Sunday, Mr. Ekeus said he had received important details from Iraqi officials on the country's secret weapons programme. In Amman, he said the Iraqi government appeared to have moved away from threats and confrontation into cooperation with the United Nations.

Iraq "is going in the direction of cooperation with the (U.N.) Security Council... away from the type of threats (and) confrontations..." the U.N. official told reporters.

Mr. Ekeus said he had received close details of Iraq's secret biological weapons programme, including delivery systems — artillery shells and missiles — during his three-day stay in Baghdad.

The envoy, who arrived here after an overnight stopover in Bahrain from Baghdad, said a team of U.N. arms experts was to return to the Iraqi capital on Tuesday.

In arrival comments, Mr. Ekeus described his latest

mission to Baghdad as "unusual" in that the Iraqi government "provided me with a lot of information and details that they used to hide" from the U.N. Special Commission.

Describing the Iraqi stand as "a new approach," he said Baghdad was taking "a step in the right direction towards cooperation" with the U.N. He told CNN television that Iraq had now admitted that it had produced "agents for biological warfare, which are, in a sense, terribly harmful and awful to be exposed to..."

"I'm surprised at the size of the biological weapons programme" that Iraq managed to conceal from the U.N. inspectors until the defection of Gen. Hassan prompted it to disclose the information, he said.

Gen. Hassan said in an interview with the Associated Press on Sunday, that the Iraqi government had "revealed all secrets" to Mr. Ekeus and suggested that the U.N. envoy might not get any further information from him.

Mr. Ekeus held a round of talks with Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh shortly after his noon arrival in Amman.

Addressing the press afterwards, Mr. Rawabdeh said Jordan was not playing any role in arranging the meeting between Mr. Ekeus and Gen. Hassan.

While the U.N. official's visit was indeed aimed at a meeting the Iraqi director, the Jordanian government was not involved in the matter, Mr. Rawabdeh stressed. No Jordanian official will attend the encounter either, he added.

Asked how Jordan can ensure that Gen. Hassan will not reveal any information that can harm Iraq's interests as Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker pledged to Parliament, Mr. Rawabdeh said: "Nobody will be in the meeting," pointing to Gen. Hassan's assertion at an Aug. 12 press conference that he will do so much thing.

Mr. Ekeus said he was not in contact with American

(Continued on page 7)

Gad Al Haq finds fault with Beijing conference

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

CAIRO (R) — A leading Muslim cleric on Monday criticized the upcoming U.N. Women's Conference in Beijing, saying it was the latest in a series of meetings aimed at undermining morality.

Gad Al Haq Ali Gad Al Haq, grand sheikh of the respected Al Azhar religious centre, also had been critical of the U.N. Population Conference held in Cairo last year.

"The women's conference in Beijing... is a link in a chain that aims to devise a new mode of life which conflicts with religious ethics and shatters the limit of morality and deeply-rooted traditions," he said in a statement carried on Egypt's Middle East News Agency.

The U.N.-sponsored world conference on women is scheduled to start in the Chinese capital on Sept. 4. Non-government groups interested in women's issues are to begin meeting Aug. 30.

The draft of the platform to be debated at the conference — and which will be non-binding once adopted — pledged to intensify efforts to achieve equality, development and peace and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

Sheikh Gad Al Haq took issue with several proposals on sexuality, as he did with last year's Cairo conference. He said the wording appeared to encourage homosexuality.

Defected Iraqi army major says uprising is imminent

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

AMMAN (AP) — A former Iraqi army officer who defected earlier this month with President Saddam Hussein's two sons-in-law on Monday predicted that a popular uprising is imminent in Iraq.

Major Izzeddine Mohammed Hassan arrived here Aug. 8 with Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan and Colonel Saddam Kamel following a reported power struggle in the ruling clan.

"A military coup and a popular revolution are coming," Maj. Izzeddine said in a telephone interview with the Associated Press, his first public comment.

"The Iraqis want to get rid of the regime. The whole world knows what is happening in Iraq... slaughter, executions, starvation."

Asked when he expected the revolt, he said: "This is in the hands of Allah."

The former army officer, who once headed President Saddam's personal escort, accused the regime of squandering the country's massive oil wealth "on wars and destruction."

Hussein Kamel, the brains behind Iraq's secret weapons programme, and Saddam Kamel fled along with their wives — both daughters of President Saddam — as well as Mayor Izzeddine, his family and about 15 soldiers.

Despite their history of close involvement in the reg-

ime, the defectors have sought to portray themselves as the new vanguard of the opposition.

Maj. Izzeddine said the defectors had no plans to leave Jordan, where they were granted asylum by King Hussein.

"We have all the security and we are not contemplating any departure from here," he said.

Hussein Kamel told the AP on Sunday that Iraq planned to invade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia this month. He claimed the plan was foiled by his defection and an American military build-up in the area.

The U.S. has reinforced its military presence in the Middle East to counter possible Iraqi threats against Kuwait following reports of unusual military movements in Iraq.

Iraq has denied the American charges as a "hallucination."

An opposition source reported Monday that a repeat invasion of Kuwait was planned in case the U.N. Security Council refused to indicate a willingness by the end of August to lift its oil embargo of Iraq.

posed in response to the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, remained.

On Sunday, U.N. chief weapons inspector Rolf Ekeus said in Baghdad that Iraq had a change of heart after the defection of Hussein Kamel. He quoted Iraqi Deputy Premier Tareq Aziz as calling the threat "an unfortunate statement."

"There was intention to invade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia," Maj. Izzeddine said. "We knew about it when we were in Baghdad. But now we do not think that the regime would carry out such action because American troops are in the region."

Maj. Izzeddine also said Uday shot and killed six women at a party on Aug. 7 and wounded the leader's half-brother, Wabban Ibrahim Al Takriti, who had recently been fired as interior minister. He said a nephew of Wabban and two more people were injured.

The shooting appeared to be part of a power struggle in Baghdad among family members and relatives of President Saddam.

But Babel, a newspaper run by Uday, reported on Aug. 10 that Wabban was shot accidentally during festive fire marking the anniversary of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

On Sunday, state-run Iraqi Television carried an interview with Wabban, his leg in plaster, in a hospital,

Turks rebuffed on Saudi beheadings

ANKARA (R) — A Turkish envoy returned on Monday from a mission to stop the beheadings of Turks in Saudi Arabia, apparently empty-handed, saying Ankara simply had to follow the appeals process for Turks on capital charges.

There is hope as long as these procedures are monitored, Nevzat Yalcintas told the semi-official Anatolian news agency.

The authorities there are wishing and praying for the situation to be sorted out in the appeals process or in the commission of high judges, he said, without details. "I hope (the Turks) will not receive this sad punishment," he said.

The beheading in Saudi Arabia earlier this month of four Turks under Saudi Arabia's strict Islamic Sharia law has caused a furore in Turkey and strained ties between the two countries.

Turkey's Foreign Ministry said last week a further 20 Turks were already on death row and 20 others were being tried on capital charges for drug smuggling.

Amnesty International said in a statement last week those on trial had no right to a lawyer and many foreigners could not follow the proceedings as trials were in Arabic, usually with no interpreter. Torture was used to extract confessions, it said.

It also said there was essentially no appeals process, but lawyers in Saudi Arabia said criminal cases went to the appeals court after the Sharia court, and that a review board monitored the Sharia court to ensure proper procedures were followed.

The commission of high judges intervenes to settle differences between different courts, the lawyers said.

Mr. Yalcintas, who went to Jeddah on Friday, delivered a message from Turkish President Suleyman Demirel to Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, asking for a halt to the executions of Turks charged with smuggling the sex-stimulant captagon drug.

He returned home without a hoped-for meeting with Saudi King Fahd, largely blaming Turkey's media for jeopardising the meeting with negative reports.

Mr. Yalcintas gave no indication of real progress in his bid for clemency for those on death row. He did not specify if Turkey would be before any further beheadings of its citizens.

Mr. Yalcintas lamented the lack of a Saudi-Turkish agreement on the exchange of criminals.

"If only there were (an agreement)," he said. "Then we could say 'give us back our criminals'." It is very difficult to go to people, showered with insult every day by our media, and ask them for amnesty and understanding for our citizens.

Turkey's media has over-flowed with vivid reports of alleged Saudi "atrocities," even suggesting criminals were beheaded so their internal organs could be used for transplants.

Turkish Islamic authorities, under attack from secularists, questioned the Islamic basis for the beheadings.

Saudi Arabia's Islamic law demands public execution by sword of rapists, murderers, drug smugglers and violent armed robbers. It has repeatedly warned that drug smugglers would be executed.

Saudi newspapers have stressed the kingdom will continue applying Islamic Sharia law regardless of outside pressure.

Meanwhile, a Lebanese and a Pakistani were executed in Saudi Arabia on Monday after being convicted on charges of smuggling drugs into the kingdom.

Lebanese Nabil Dawoud Abbas Hamad and Baruz Rashid Mohammad, a Pakistani, were beheaded in Riyadh.

Scholars seek to explore early Muslim-Christian ties, co-existence

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Looking for a better understanding between faiths, world scholars and professors Monday sought to highlight historical background to the Muslim-Christian relationship, especially in terms of co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims through Islamic history.

In a paper delivered at a four-day workshop on "Christian Perceptions of Islam: Muslim Perceptions of Christianity: The Historical Record," Professor Wadi Haddad from the Duncan Black MacDonald Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations tackled the status of Christians and Jews in Islam and argued that they were not reduced to a taxpayers' status.

"Christians in the Muslim empire were not only payers of jizya and kharaj" (forms of taxes in the Islamic economic system), he said. "They were farmers, artisans, craftsmen, traders and merchants. Among them were accomplished physicians, pharmacologists, philosophers, astronomers and theologians," he said.

"Negative assessments of the dhimma — tax — system was published by an Israeli writer in 1985 in an effort to justify the Zionist insistence on establishing a Jewish state," he added.

Quoting Egyptian writer Fahmi Huweidhi, Mr. Haddad said: "Muslims and non-Muslims together form a unique community — the umma."

Jane McAuliffe, chair and professor of the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto in Canada, concluded in her paper on Islam's concept of other religions that there was not a common stance among Muslim scholars regarding claims that the scripts of the Old and New Testaments were altered or tampered with.

"The assertion of whole scale textual corruption remains an uncommon stance," she said. While "the Koran and the early biographical materials on (the Prophet) Mohammad charge that Jews and Christians with the possession and/or the conveyance of corrupted scriptures... the Muslim tradition has certainly not seen it fit to ignore completely previous scriptures nor to render conclusive judgements against them. In fact, they function as key foundation stones to situate and support the Islamic edifice."

Sidney Griffith of the Institute of Christian Oriental Research at the Catholic University of America in the U.S. said: "In modern times there have been efforts to reinvent the Arabic theological expression of the indigenous Christians of the Islamic World. The Christian theology in Arabic is essentially shaped by the religious experience of Islam, which has in fact provided the paradigm for a genuine doctrinal development in the presentation of the teachings of the Christian faith."

Expected to speak at the workshop on Tuesday, which is organised by the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies and held at Forte Grand Hotel, is Jane Smith from Liff School of Theology oo French Christian narratives concerning Prophet Mohammad and the religion of Islam from the 11th to the 18th centuries. Other papers will tackle the Bible in early Muslim anti-Christian polemics and the structure of Muslim polemics in the later middle ages as well as reflections of a late 19th century convert to Islam on Judaism and Christianity in Ottoman Jerusalem.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrian foreign minister to tour Scandinavia
DAMASCUS (AP) — Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa will begin a five-day tour of Scandinavia on Tuesday, the state-run news agency reported. Mr. Sharaa will visit Denmark, Sweden and Norway for discussions on "the latest developments in Syria's relations with the European Union (EU)." SANA said Monday. He will also hold talks with EU officials on a conference in Barcelona, Spain, later this year that will deal with ties between the union and non-European Mediterranean countries.

Militants shoot dead Egyptian policeman
MINYA (AFP) — Militants shot dead a policeman and wounded another Monday in Mallawi in southern Egypt, police said. Mohammed Galal Abdul Ali, 50, was killed and his colleague, Zaki Abdel Ali, 50, was seriously injured when fundamentalists opened fire and fled, a police official said. The death brings to 850 the number of people killed since Islamist militants began a violent campaign to topple the Egyptian government in March 1992.

Engine failure forces PIA jet to land
ABU DHABI (AP) — A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) jet with 152 people on board was forced to return to Abu Dhabi airport shortly after take-off Sunday. The failure, a PIA official said Monday, Salim Bhattu, the airline's manager in Abu Dhabi, said the Airbus A-300 had just taken off Sunday for the Pakistani city of Lahore when the crew noticed the problem. Mr. Bhattu said there were no injuries or panic and praised the captain and the airport's emergency services for their handling of the situation.

Sphinx will never recover its beard
CAIRO (AFP) — The Sphinx of Giza will never recover its beard, part of which is in London, Egyptian Culture Minister Farouk Hosni said Sunday during a tour of the pyramids. "It is not possible to return to the Sphinx its fake beard because part of it is in a museum in London and other fragments are in a Cairo museum. Bringing them together would only constitute a fifth of the Sphinx's original false beard," the minister told reporters. "It is therefore not necessary" to ask London for the return of its portion, ending rumours that Cairo had made such a request. The six-year restoration of the 4,500-year-old Sphinx, a 72-metre high statue with a lion's body and a pharaoh's head — including a false beard as a sign of virility — is expected to be completed "within one year," Mr. Hosni said.

Two killed in clash on Tajik-Afghan border
MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian border guards killed two Tajik rebels during a gun battle as they tried to cross the Tajik-Afghan border, the Interfax news agency reported Monday. The clash occurred at the Khorog border crossing, the stronghold of the Tajik autonomous region of Gorno-Badakhshan, southeast of Dushanbe. In a separate incident, unknown attackers Sunday killed the deputy head of police in the mountainous region of Fayzabad, 40 kilometres west of Dushanbe, Interfax reported. Emom Khamoydinov, 40, was shot in front of his home, the latest of about 30 police officers killed in the current unrest. A pro-Russian government took power in Dushanbe, in December 1992, overthrowing an Islamic-democratic coalition and leading thousands of opponents to flee to Afghanistan. Since then, Islamist rebels with close links to Iran have launched a violent struggle against Tajik President Emomali Rakhimov's regime.

'The Engineer's hand' seen in bomb attack

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Within minutes of the suicide bus bomb in Jerusalem on Monday an anonymous caller to Israel Radio claimed that "The Engineer" had struck again.

The nickname sends shivers down Israeli spines. It belongs to Yehya Ayyash, the master bomb-maker who has repeatedly slipped through the fingers of Israel's army and Shio Bet secret police.

He is top of a very long wanted list. Israel says he is behind the wave of bombings which have killed 77 Israelis and foreigners since the 1993 Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Israel peace accord.

He has eluded capture for more than two years and narrowly escaped death. Not much is known about him. He is thought to be 29 years old.

At his native Rafat village, in the West Bank highlands between the towns of Ramallah and Nablus, relatives believe Mr. Ayyash is under "God's protection and speak of him as a mythical figure. They tell reporters fantastic stories of how he is saved by divine intervention.

In one story relatives describe how Israeli soldiers kidnapped Mr. Ayyash when a student at Bir Zeit University. The soldiers took him to a deserted settlement road where they tried to kill him.

But suddenly, three women in white clothes came down from heaven and protected him.

Convinced that he was under God's protection, Mr. Ayyash had since dedicated his life to what Hamas calls its holy war against the Jewish state.

Israeli security sources say Mr. Ayyash, an electrical engineer by education, prepares his own explosives and plans his attacks carefully. The most notorious attack attributed to him was the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv in October 1994, in which 22 people were killed.

He has earned the name "the man with seven souls" for his ability to cheat death. Hamas activists say that his last scrape with the grim reaper was in April in PLO-ruled Gaza. He left a building just half an hour before it blew up, killing senior Hamas activist Kamal Khelil. Hamas blamed Israeli agents for the explosion. The Palestinian National Authority said it was a bomb factory accident.

Since then, Hamas activists said Mr. Ayyash had left Gaza to an Arab country and that his wife and child had joined him there.

But Israeli security sources say he was still hiding in Gaza under an assumed identity. "He's still in Gaza, living with his family," said one Israeli security source.

Militants keep up violence against peace efforts

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The bombing on Monday of a Jerusalem bus that killed six people and wounded more than 100 was the latest in a series of bloody attacks that have battered Israel-Palestinian peace efforts.

Here are some of the key incidents in which scores of people have died while Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiate implementation of various stages of their framework peace accord signed in September 1993:

— Feb. 25, 1994: Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein sprays gunfire on worshippers in a mosque in Hebron in the West Bank, killing at least 30 before survivors beat him to death.

— April 6: Bus blast in northern Israel took off a life eight Israelis and a suicide bomber. The Islamic Resistance Movement, the leading Palestinian group opposed to the peace deal, claims responsibility.

— April 13: Bus blast in crowded bus station in Israeli town of Hadera kills five and a Hamas suicide bomber.

— Oct. 10: Two Hamas guerrillas spray popular Jerusalem night life area with automatic weapons fire, killing two Israelis before Israeli police shoot them dead.

— Oct. 14: Kidnapped Israeli soldier Nachshon Waxman, 19, is killed during failed Israeli rescue attempt on a Hamas hideout. An Israeli commando officer and three Hamas kidnappers also die.

— Oct. 19: Hamas bomber Saleh Abdul Rahim Al Sourki kills himself and 22 other people in suicide bomb attack on an Israeli bus on Tel Aviv's main Dizengoff street.

— Nov. 2: Palestinian journalist Hani Abed, an Islamic Jihad activist, is killed when his car blows up in Gaza.

Islamic Jihad blames Israel, which does not deny responsibility.

— Nov. 11: Palestinian cyclist from the Islamic Jihad movement kills himself and three Israeli soldiers at a military post near a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip.

Dec. 25: Palestinian policeman, member of Hamas, blows himself up near soldiers' bus stop in Jerusalem, wounding 13 people.

Jan. 22, 1995: Two Islamic Jihad suicide bombers kill 21 Israelis, all but one of them soldiers, in explosions that rip through a bus stop at Beit Lid near Netanya in central Israel.

— April 2: Mysterious explosion in Gaza City apartment kills several Palestinians, among them leading Hamas guerrilla Kamal Khelil and an assistant. Hamas, vowing revenge, blames Israel for blast, accuses PLO of collusion.

— April 9: Militants kill seven Jews in two suicide bombings near Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip. Hamas and Islamic Jihad claim responsibility.

— June 25: Palestinian suicide bomber blows up donkey cart laden with explosives around Jewish settlements in Gaza Strip. The man and the donkey are killed. Hamas claims responsibility.

July 18: Two Israeli hikers killed in the occupied West Bank in attack which the army says was probably carried out by Hamas or another group opposed to Israel-PLO peace moves.

— July 24: Suicide bombing on bus in suburb of Tel Aviv, claimed by Hamas, kills seven people.

— Aug. 21: Apparent suicide bombing on Jerusalem City bus kills six people, wounds more than 100.

Sudan rebel group says rivals have declared war

NAIROBI (AFP) — The South Independence Movement (SSIM) charged Monday that the mainstream rebel faction led by John Garang had declared war on it and had ruled out reconciliation talks.

In a statement released here, SSIM spokesman David de Chand said he had received a "verbal communication" on Sunday from a senior official in Colonel Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) saying that the group was "no longer interested in peace talks unless the SSIM was headed by William Nyuon," a dissident member.

SSIM last week denied claims by Nyuon and another dissident, John Luk Jok, that they had deposed the group's leader, Riek Machar.

Mr. de Chand said the alleged coup in the SSIM was a disinformation campaign orchestrated by Col. Garang. Mr. Luk and Mr. Nyuon had defected to the SPLA, he added.

"It is now obvious that Col. Garang has no agenda for peace but to wage war against SSIM," Mr. de Chand said.

Mr. de Chand said Mr. Nyuon and Mr. Luk were now in the Kongor area of southern Sudan preparing to attack SSIM positions in Yuai, Ayod and Wast.

"SSIM's 'security organs' had asked Machar for 'extraordinary and emergency measures against any subversive activities related to this conspiracy,'" he said, adding that the SPLA would be held responsible for the consequences.

SPLA spokesman Steven Wondu told AFP that Pagan Amum, chairman of the SPLA's peace committee, had made it clear to the SSIM that his faction would not negotiate reunification with Machar because as far as the SPLA was concerned, he ceased to be SSIM's leader on August 14, when he was allegedly deposed by Mr. Nyuon.

Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter visited Sudan last month to continue efforts to end the civil war there and called in Nairobi for unity talks between the rebels, saying: "I think it would be constructive to have unity within the southern command."

South Sudanese rebels took up arms against Khartoum in 1993 under Col. Garang's SPLA.

It split into two factions in 1991, when Mr. Machar, then Col. Garang's deputy, left to form the SPLA-United.

Moroccans asked to vote for constitutional change

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco on Sunday called a referendum on Sept. 15 for a constitutional amendment that would allow parliament to vote on the state budget in June rather than in October.

The king also said in a televised speech marking the 42nd anniversary of the start of the fight for independence from France, that another referendum would be held next year for splitting the unicameral parliament into two chambers.

Announcing the first referendum, the king said passing the budget in June would make more sense as it would allow the government to see the result of the agricultural harvest in May before making its budget forecasts.

"This is not a technical amendment. It is a vital amendment because Morocco is, and will for years to come, remain dependent on agriculture," the king said.

"Therefore, we have to take agricultural revenue into consideration in preparing our budget so that we do not make over-optimistic or over-pessimistic projections," he added.

"I hope you will vote yes," the king told his people.

This will mean that the next state budget will be passed at the end of October for the six months from January to June, after which a 12-month budget would be prepared to take effect from July 1996.

The government's forecasts in the present budget for fiscal 1995 were thrown off balance by a disastrous cereal harvest following a severe drought.

The king did not give a date for the second referendum but said he was speaking now to give his people a chance to think about the proposed change.

King Hassan said his proposal was to split parliament into two chambers.

"There will be a chamber for deputies and one for senators," he said, adding that the bicameral system would create a more representative parliament.

He did not give more details on how the deputies in the proposed parliament would be elected.

Morocco's opposition parties have criticised the present parliamentary system, under which two thirds of the 333 members of parliament are elected by direct ballot and one third by electoral college.

Sudan Airways in row over Britain-S. Africa flights

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A row erupted on Monday between Sudan Airways and its former sales agent in South Africa over who was responsible for leaving hundreds of people stranded in London and thousands more with unused tickets.

Sudan Airways, which halted flights between South Africa and Britain last week, said it was not responsible for issuing tickets for the suspended Johannesburg-London service.

But Johannesburg-based Airline Liaison, until last week the airline's general sales agent, said Sudan Airways was ultimately responsible.

"In terms of this agreement all passenger liabilities are ultimately the responsibility of Sudan Airways," Airline Liaison said.

Sudan Airways offered a divergent view.

"All tickets issued by Airline Liaison and other expenses for operating flights to Johannesburg (and London) via Khartoum are the liability of Airline Liaison pursuant to an agreement between Sudan Airways and Airline Liaison dated June 21, 1995," the airline said in a statement faxed to Reuters by its London office.

Sudan Airways said it was planning legal action against Airline Liaison. The South African company, which has ceased operations, said it would defend any such action.

Airline Liaison said the contract for operating the Johannesburg-London flights was awarded by Sudan Airways to Air Ops of Europe, a Swedish airline. The South African company said it had bought seats on these flights.

It said the Swedish company ceased operating the services for Sudan Airways after a commercial dispute and efforts by Airline Liaison and Sudan Airways to make alternative arrangements had failed through.

British Airways has offered stranded passengers and those holding unused tickets discounted fares. Sudan Airways said it planned to reopen the South Africa-London route in November.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
14:00 Captain Planet
14:30 M.A.N.T.I.S.
15:00 Road to Avonlea
16:00 Families
17:00 Children's Programme — Doug
17:30 Monty Python
17:50 Taratara
18:00 News in French
18:15 Fast Pas Revue
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 You Be Your Life
20:00 Piglet Files
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 True Blue
22:00 News in English
22:25 The Fire Next Time
23:30 New York Undercover
23:59 Grace Under Fire

PRAYER TIMES
04:36 Fair
05:59 (Sunrise) Dubai
12:37 Dhuhur
18:18 Maghrib
20:41 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweithel, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel.

637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684192
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER
Bullfinch supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will cool at night and fine during the day with winds north-westerly moderate to severe. In Amman, moderate weather conditions will prevail with winds northerly moderate to active and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 16/27
Aqaba 24/35
Deserts 18/33

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Jordan Valley 25/37
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 27, Aqaba 35. Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Mathias Mazharah 820425
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 849028
Dr. Salim Dubaili 776751
Dr. Khalid Madi 743500
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637855
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636734
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimouni pharmacy 637661
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
Najibi pharmacy 847632
IBRD:
Dr. Mohammed Al Khalili 273099
Alquds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Randa Shahin 985711
Khalil pharmacy 905417

HOSPITALS
Haseel Medical Centre 817813/32
Khalil Maternity, J. Amn 64291/6

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:40 Beirut (RJ)
07:45 Bangkok (add) (RJ)
08:00 Athens (RJ)
09:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
13:00 Geneva, Brussels (GF)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
14:05 London (RJ)
14:55 Madrid (RJ)
21:05 Athens (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
22:20 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
02:15 Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:30 Damascus, Paris (AF)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
10:45 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Vienna (OS)
14:30 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:55 Sharm Al Sheikh, Munich (YP)
15:20 Cairo (MS)
15:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
16:00 Munich (YP)
16:00 Riyadh (SV)
01:55 Bucharest (RO)

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:45 Madrid (add) (RJ)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
10:15 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
10:15 Athens (RJ)
10:35 Beirut (RJ)
10:35 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
17:50 London (RJ)
18:25 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:00 Cairo, Alexandria (RJ)
22:30 Montreal (add) (RJ)
01:45 Bangkok (add) (RJ)
02:20 Madrid (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
06:20 Vienna (OS)
09:25 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Munich (GF)
14:00 Munich (YP)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:20 Rome (IAG)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg
Apple 700/500
Banana 600
Banana (Makammari) 620
Cabbage 140/100
Carrot 320/220
Cauliflower 330/250
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 300/200
Eggplant 180/100
Figs 380/280
Garlic 680/500
Lemon 420/300
Marrow (large) 620/450
Marrow (small) 380/250
Okra 140/90
Onion (dry) 750/600
Orange 450/380
Pepper (hot) 750/600
Pepper (sweet) 200/100
Potato 200/100
Sring Beans 320/220
Sweet Melon 520/400
Tomato 280/180
Water Melon 130/70

Home News

Jordan Times, August 22, 1995

3

UNDP '95 human development report says women still lagging behind

Princess Basma: Gender discrepancies should be reduced

By Cathy King
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The concept of human development has been focused upon over the last three decades, and it has been repetitively proven that sustainable development cannot be achieved without further equality and lessened disparity between the roles of men and women, stated Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday.

On the occasion of the official launch of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 1995 report in the Middle East region, Princess Basma, the region's honorary ambassador to the UNDP, asserted that the "role of women is still marginalised... and legislation (still) discriminates against women."

its women as well as its men; analysed global trends in closing and widening gender gaps in different regions and countries; and presented new indicators of gender equality to rank countries on a global scale.

It also proposed new methodologies to measure and value the unpaid contributions made by women and men to human development through household work and community activities; highlighted concrete policies that have ensured more equal access to opportunities for women and men in various countries; and finally identified a new action agenda for promoting gender equality in the decades ahead.

"In the Arab World, we are at the beginning of the road," Princess Basma told the gathering attended by prominent members of the national and international community in Amman.

In the Arab World, women constitute 21 per cent of the workforce, hold four per cent of parliamentary seats

and one per cent of ministerial posts," noted the Princess who added that through cooperation on a national and Arab level this should be improved and the discrepancies reduced.

The meeting was addressed by UNDP resident representative in Jordan Jorgen Lissner and UN Under-Secretary General Huzem Beblawi and Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf.

The deep interest in women's role as a global fact, said Mr. Lissner, is that "investment in women, in their education, in their health, in their active participation in the economy and in civil society ranks as one of humankind's most beneficial investments."

Ms. Khalaf stated that although gender equality still had to be attained worldwide, the beginning signs in Jordan are encouraging.

She said that Jordan had worked upon improving its resources and despite its economic difficulties improvements have been witnessed.

Jordan was chosen to launch the report regionally on account of Princess Basma's position as the region's honorary ambassador to UNDP.

Princess Haya tours northern badia region development projects

AL SAFAWI (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein toured the northern badia regions where she inspected a government sponsored project designed to raise the standard of living of these region's inhabitants.



Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein Monday tours the northern badia regions and the development projects in progress there (Petra photo)

The project is a cooperative effort of the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) and the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre.

The Princess, who was accompanied by Sharifa Zein Bint Nasser, the director of public relations and finance for the project, was briefed by engineers and officials on the different stages of the project's implementation.

The scheme entails helping livestock breeders in caring for sheep and other development projects which will be set up on 11,000-

square-kilometres in the northern and eastern badia regions.

Sharif Fawaz Zaben, His Majesty King Hussein's advisor on tribal affairs, and

several army officers accompanied the Princess on a tour of the region.

Jordanian, Palestinian business group plans for October economic conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — A joint committee on agriculture formed by the Jordanian-Palestinian Business Council (JPBC) opened a meeting in Amman Monday to prepare plans for submission to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference scheduled to convene in Amman in late October.

The committee will study projects and prepare an agenda in agricultural cooperation fields to be first referred to the JPBC meeting in the coming week, according to a statement from the Jordanian Businessmen's Association

(JBA) where the meeting is to be held.

The two sides also reviewed the issue of establishing a Jordanian-Palestinian marketing company as the JPBC had suggested last June, the statement said.

The committee had agreed on setting up a technical team to convene Tuesday to chart the broad aims of the projected company, it added.

The Jordanian side was headed by Jack Khayat, and the Palestinian side by Ismail Dweik.

Meanwhile, the JBA said Monday that an executive committee coordinating the

private sector participation in the MENA conference will meet on Aug. 28 to discuss topics on the agenda of the MENA meeting and the work of the sectoral committees entrusted with helping in the preparation for the upcoming conference.

The JBA said at least 100 businessmen representing various economic sectors will attend the meeting along with representatives of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which is helping the private sector in its efforts.

WHAT'S GOING ON

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '95 EXHIBITIONS

- Works of graphic art by several artists at the South Gallery.
- Photography show "Elements in Harmony" by Hala Hodiéh at the Blue House.
- Display of pointed stone and steel, "Embargo Art" by Iraqi artist Nuha Al Radi at the Garden of the Blue House.
- "Early Morning Scribbles" by Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha and Jordanian artist Rajwa Bint Ali and "Late Night Scribbles" by Amin Al Basha and artist Ali Bermamet at the North Gallery.
- Ceramic shop at the lower Garden.
- Sculpture by Rajwa Bint Ali at the Open Air Sculpture Workshop.
- Works by contemporary artists at the Central Gallery.
- 3-D experiments in calligraphy by Usama Khalidi at the library.

PLAYS

- "The Maids," (written by Jean Genet) starring Majid Al Qasas and Najwa Kondakji at the Royal Cultural Centre, Main Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- "Badranah," (in Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m.

NEWS

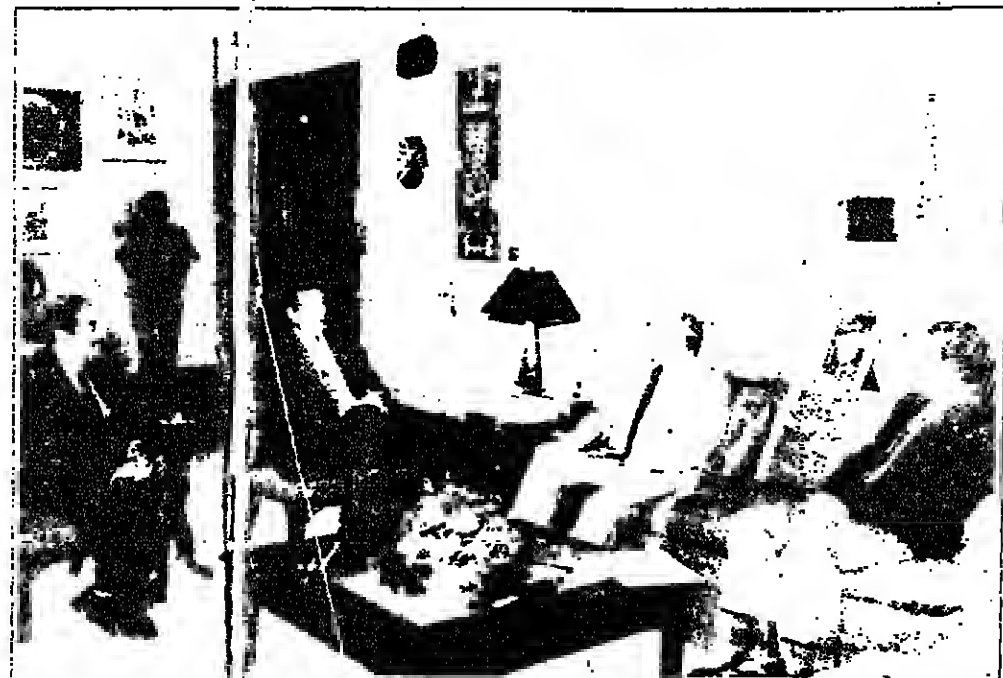
- McNeil - Lehrer News Hour at the American Centre at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- Oil paintings by Yassin Al Mohammadawi at Baladna Art Gallery.
- Paintings by "Pioneers of the Fifties" Isma'il and Suzanne Al Sheikhly, Khalid Qasab, and Dr. Nuri Behjet at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina.
- Exhibition demonstrating the developments of cinema over the past century at the French Cultural Centre.

Lebanon looks into participating at MENA summit, says visiting minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — Visiting Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Shawqi Fakhour met Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday and announced later that the Lebanese government was studying a Jordanian invitation to participate in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit due in October.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday meets with visiting Lebanese Minister of Agriculture Shawqi Fakhour (second right) who arrived Sunday morning on a three-day official visit. Also attending the meeting were Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif and Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan William Habib (right) (Petra photo)

The subject will be fully considered by the Lebanese government which will make the final decision in this regard, said the minister in a statement quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Lebanon and Syria have avoided meetings connected to the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process pending progress in the bilateral phase.

The Lebanese minister, who is today expected to sign an agreement with his Jordanian counterpart, Mansour Ben Tarif, on further promoting Jordanian-Lebanese trade and the exchange of agricultural products, said that the talks he held with Mr. Ben Tarif Sunday were positive and that the two countries were keen on encouraging full cooperation in agricultural trade.

The Prime Minister was quoted as saying that Jordan was ready to offer assistance to Lebanon in reconstructing the national economy following 15 years of civil strife.

Jordan was interested in promoting Lebanon's role as part of its ongoing efforts to re-establish solidarity among Arab countries, Petra was quoted as saying.

Mr. Fakhour said that His Majesty King Hussein, to whom he delivered a message from Lebanese President Elias Hrawi Sunday, has stressed that the Kingdom was ready to stand by Lebanon and offer it all possible support and assistance.

Jordan has been exporting different types of agricultural products to Lebanon and importing Lebanese apples, cherries, oranges and lemon under an existing agreement which is to be upgraded Tuesday, according to Agriculture Minister Fakhour.

Mr. Lawzi said that under the old agreement ministers of agriculture from the two countries met once a year and a follow-up committee met occasionally to update agreements or to solve problems arising from the exchange of trade.

Ministry plans to impose tolls on certain roads

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour Monday announced that a road toll system on certain highways may go into effect before the end of the year.

Dr. Ensour said that toll charges will range between 100 fils to 500 fils. The aim, he added, is to have the public cover part of the road maintenance costs.

Tolls will be applied first on the 70-kilometre Zara-Ghor Hadith Highway connecting the Jordan Valley with Aqaba Highway —

one of the best highways in the Middle East region, he said.

On cooperation between Jordan and Israel in the establishment of road systems, Dr. Ensour said that according to international norms neighbouring countries are expected to design their road networks so that they link through the borders of the countries easily.

In that respect, he said, the Ministry of Public Works will build several bridges linking the Kingdom with the Palestine self-rule areas as well as with Israel.

He emphasised, however, that such projects are still at the preliminary planning stage.

Dr. Ensour said the Jordan Armed Forces recently fortified the King Hussein Bridge on the Jordan River so that it can now support up to 60 tonnes (double the weight it previously was able to support). The added capacity is expected to help trade between Jordan and the West Bank.

The minister said Jordan currently has 10,000 kilometres of asphalted roads and 6,000 kilometres of agricultural roads which the Ministry of Public Works is continually maintaining.

He said, however, that the ministry's JD 38 million annual budget has required it to adopt a programme of gradual maintenance because at least JD 150 million will be required to conduct all-the-necessary maintenance on all the Kingdom's roads.

The minister said that the proposed toll plan will first be submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval before it can be enforced.



A CONVENIENT REFRESHMENT STAND: Iraqi men sell brewed tea in a downtown Amman area (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Joint transport panel to meet today

AMMAN (Petra) — The Syrian-Jordanian committee on transport and transit will meet here today to examine ways to simplify customs measures and facilitate travel between the Kingdom and Syria.

The two parties are expected to discuss customs tariffs, entry fees paid by vehicles at border posts, and ways to facilitate transit, a Ministry of Transport statement said Monday.

Schools open for new scholastic year today

AMMAN (Petra) — On the eve of the re-opening of schools today for the 1995-96 scholastic year, the Department of Education in the Amman area said Monday that it had decided on assigning 15 of Amman governorate's 221 schools to offer evening classes to students.

Department Director Mashour Kharabsheh said the department has also made plans to open 26 literacy and adult education centres within the governorate.

A total of 115,000 first graders are around the country this year are to attend school, and of these at least 9,000 students are located in Amman Governorate, according to Mr. Kharabsheh.

The new scholastic year will also see the opening of three new schools located at Yajouz, Naifeh and Manarah districts, built at a cost of JD 2.25 million, said Mr. Kharabsheh.

A JD 3.5 million project to build six more schools is under way, with their completion expected towards the end of next year, Mr. Kharabsheh said.

The new schools are located at Manarah, Naser, Hashemi Janoubi, Sweileh, Marka and University of Jordan housing estate.

The department has also appropriated lands in the Tia Al Ali, Tareq, Prince Rashed, and Al Khazneb districts of Amman, as well as at army officers housing estate at the cost of JD 1.7 million as sites for proposed new schools, Mr. Kharabsheh said.

About 1.315 million students will attend private and public schools in various parts of the Kingdom today.

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	Arr. Damascus
5:00 p.m. (over 10)	
Dep. Damascus	Arr. Amman
7:30 a.m. (over 10)	
5:00 p.m. (over 10)	
MARKET PRICES	
Upper market prices in \$/kg	
Apple	1.00
Banana (Mukammal)	0.80
Cabbage	0.50
Carrot	0.40
Cauliflower	0.60
Cucumbers (small)	0.30
Cucumbers (large)	0.40
Eggplant	0.50
Fennel	0.40
Garlic	0.60
Grapes	1.20
Lemon	0.80
Marrow (large)	0.40
Marrow (small)	0.30
Melons	0.50
Onion (dry)	0.40
Orange	0.60
Peaches	0.80
Pepper (green)	0.50
Pepper (red)	0.60
Potato	0.40
String Beans	0.50
Sweet Melon	0.40
Tomato	0.50
Water Melon	0.40

Hashimoto, Kono to contest for leadership of top Japan party



Ryutaro Hashimoto

TOKYO (R) — Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, one of Japan's most popular politicians, on Monday launched a long-awaited bid for his party's presidency, a post which would make him a strong contender to be the next prime minister.

The present Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) president, Foreign Minister Yohsei Kono, also said on Monday he would seek a second two-year term in the Sept. 22 party election, taking up Mr. Hashimoto's challenge.

Mr. Hashimoto, who gained considerable praise for his tough approach to a car-trade row with the United States that was settled in June, said on Monday: "our party has come under severe criticism from the people in the upper-house elections."

"I will seek the presidency to recover trust in our party," he told a news conference at party headquarters.

The LDP suffered a setback in the July 23 upper-house polls. In voting by party in the proportional representation part of the polls,

it lost to the opposition Shinshinto (New Frontier Party), the first time it had ever been anything but the country's most popular political party.

But Mr. Hashimoto, 58, is riding a wave of popular support after resolving the car-trade row with the United States, averting U.S. sanctions and a possible trade war with Japan's closest ally.

Since he began a year-long stint as LDP secretary-general in 1989, Mr. Hashimoto has consistently figured high as a future prime minister in opinion polls. But he had never launched a formal bid to become party head, a necessary first step.

Against that, Mr. Kono,

who is also 58, is fighting a rear-guard action, mostly on the strength of winning back a share of power for his party last year after the LDP spent a fruitless year in opposition.

Mr. Kono told a meeting of the party executive board he will run in next month's presidential elections, an LDP spokesman said. Mr. Kono was not expected to announce his platform until Sunday after returning from an official trip to Cambodia, Thailand and Australia.

The LDP enjoyed 40 years of unbroken rule until repeated scandals toppled it from power in general elec-

tions in 1993, even though it remained the biggest party. It made a comeback in June, 1994, by forming an unwieldy coalition that made Socialist Party leader Tomiichi Murayama prime minister.

Mr. Murayama does not have to call general elections for the more powerful lower house until mid-1997. Many senior Socialist and LDP members say the earliest possible date is next May.

The Sept. 22 race will decide who will become one of the top contenders to be the next premier, because the head of one of the two biggest parties, the LDP or Shinshinto, will most likely succeed Mr. Murayama after the general elections.

Mr. Hashimoto said he would continue to support Mr. Murayama's coalition government for the time being, but would strive for an LDP government at the time of the next general elections.

China expresses 'deep regret' over Japanese plans to cut aid

BEIJING (AFP) — China expressed "deep regret" Monday over Japan's plans to restrict grant aid to Beijing after last week's nuclear test, urging Tokyo to reflect on its wartime atrocities rather than criticizing others.

"The Japanese government unwarrantedly criticized China's nuclear test and indicated that it would take the step of reducing its governmental grants to China. We would like to express our deep regret about that," said a foreign ministry spokesman.

The Japanese government and people reacted with outrage over Beijing's nuclear test Thursday, with Foreign Minister Yohsei Kono telling the Chinese ambassador that Tokyo's grant aid to China would be "restricted" in response.

While saying that China understood "the feelings of Japan as world's only vic-

tim country of nuclear weapons," the foreign ministry spokesman said he hoped Japan would "understand the sentiment of the Chinese people especially on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II."

"Japan should make a profound introspection of its historical responsibilities instead of making a fuss over the issue of China's nuclear tests and still less linking nuclear issues with economic issues," he said.

Only in this way could Tokyo "prevent the healthy development of Sino-Japanese relations from being impaired," he said.

Japan is China's largest creditor, extending 1.55 trillion yen to its neighbour since 1979, including aid and yen-denominated low-interest official loans.

Japanese politicians have accused the government of

not going far enough in its retaliation for China's nuclear test, referring to pledges by Mr. Kono that future official loans would not be affected.

Loans from Japan to China totalled 138.7 billion yen for the year to March 1994, compared with 9.8 billion yen in grant aid and 7.6 billion yen in technical cooperation.

The Chinese foreign ministry spokesman reiterated Beijing's commitment to the non-first use of nuclear missiles, saying "China's possession of a small amount of nuclear weapons is solely for its self-defence and poses no threat to any country."

He also expressed support for the early conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), after which China has pledged to stop all testing.

Insect expert cooks 'em up

CLEVELAND (AP) — There could be a million species of insects still uncovered in the world, and Gene White has a hunger to find them. "Think of the possibilities," the graduate student says. He's not talking about scientific possibilities. He means cooking and eating. Entomology — the study of insects — is his field of study at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. But his field of avocation is entomophagy: eating insects. "There are still some things that I'll look at and think, 'I don't know about this,' but then I'll take a bite. Man, I'll eat anything," says Mr. White, a former exterminator. Mr. White and his collection of bug recipes were on Sunday's programme at bugfest '95, sponsored by Cleveland Metroparks. Mr. White's recipes include herbed rice with termites. That includes steamed wild rice, diced carrots, garlic and turmeric to taste, and as many termites as you can stand, or want.

10-year-old shoots toddler in fight over video game

HOLLYWOOD, Florida (AFP) — A 10-year-old shot her three-year-old brother in the head during a quarrel over a video game and was charged with attempted murder, police said Sunday.

The boy underwent brain surgery and was listed in serious condition after the incident Friday, which occurred when the children were left at home alone. The girl, whose name was being withheld because of her age, shot the child when she and another eight-year-old brother and an eight-year-old cousin were playing with the gun and began arguing over a video game. After the shooting, the girl ran to a neighbour's for help but first told authorities the child had shot himself with their father's pistol. She later recanted and said she was afraid to tell the truth because her father might beat her. She was charged with attempted murder. The children's mother had left about an hour before the shooting for a vacation cruise and the father was at the home of a friend. The parents could be charged with negligence.

Dog arrested for killing cat

LONDON (AFP) — British police have arrested a dog for killing a cat, and are holding it in custody pending a ruling on its fate, officials said Monday. Lucy, a three-year-old bull terrier bitch, was seized on Friday after doing what came naturally with a neighbour's pet moggy. Under the dangerous dogs act, designed to clamp down on breeds like pit bulls and rottweilers, police can seize hounds which cause injury to humans — in this case the dead feline's owner. "The police said that because the lady whose cat it was was in shock, that meant she had suffered an injury," said Trevor Cooper, lawyer for disgruntled owner Lisa O'Brien. "Under the dangerous dogs act, Lucy would have to have injured a person, not a cat. They seized the dog unlawfully. They had no reason to seize her at all, even under this ridiculous act," he added.

Courtney Love

carried off stage MOUNTAIN VIEW, California (AP) — A security guard carried a sobbing Courtney Love off the stage after the leader of the rock band Hole twice jumped into the audience to attack fans. "Louder, you..." she exhorted, apparently unhappy at the audience response on Friday's closing night of the summer Lollapalooza tour of alternative bands. Ms. Love is the widow of former Nirvana lead singer Kurt Cobain, who committed suicide in April 1994.

Judge to be Australia's next governor-general

CANBERRA (AFP) — High Court Judge Sir William Deane will be Australia's next — and possibly last — governor-general in a fixed-term five-year appointment announced Monday by Prime Minister Paul Keating.

Mr. Deane will succeed the current governor-general, Bill Hayden, who will relinquish the office Feb. 16 after seven years. Mr. Keating said in a statement.

It means that Mr. Deane, chosen by a Labour government and formally appointed by Queen Elizabeth II of Britain, could begin his term only weeks before an election due by May but tipped by some observers for March.

The judge, 64, has accepted an appointment terminating on December 31, 2000, the date by which the Keating government wants Australia to have its first president as elected head of a new republic. However, a national referendum will decide the country's constitutional future.

Conservative opposition leader John Howard, who is well ahead in most opinion polls, is an avowed monarchist although he has promised to put the issue of whether Australia should become a republic before a national people's convention.

Mr. Keating's statement ended months of speculation about who would succeed

Mr. Hayden, who declined an invitation to stay in the office for another two years.

The government was said to favour the appointment of an aboriginal or a woman — with an aboriginal woman strongly tipped recently.

Mr. Keating said: "I warmly welcome her majesty's appointment of Sir William Deane as governor-general to succeed Mr. Hayden."

Mr. Hayden, a former leader of the Labor Party in opposition, was nominated for the office in 1989 by the man who ousted him from the party leadership six years previously, Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

Mr. Keating said a measure of the government's admiration for Mr. Hayden's contribution was that it had asked if he would extend his term for another two years.

Sir Deane is one of six High Court justices who made the historic 1992 Mabo land rights ruling recognising Australia's indigenous peoples' prior ownership of the land. The ruling was enshrined in legislation passed through parliament two years ago by Mr. Keating.

The judge said in a statement that he and his wife were moved by the confidence shown in them by their country. "The appointment is a very great honour and we approach it with humility and an awareness of the responsibility it entails," he said.

Mugabe urges Nigerians to have spirit of reconciliation

ABUJA (AFP) — President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda have urged Nigerians to have a spirit of reconciliation in order to end their country's political instability.

Mr. Mugabe made the remarks here Sunday on behalf of the two heads of state at a dinner offered in their honour by their hosts, Nigerian ruler General Sani Abacha.

"I urge you to use the spirit that propelled you in Liberia to solve the problems of Nigeria," said the Zimbabwean leader, recalling that at the same spirit was needed after his own country's war for independence.

A new peace accord to end Liberia's nearly six-year civil war was signed here on a Saturday night.

The two presidents Mr. Mugabe and Mr. Museveni arrived here Sunday on a 24-hour working visit to Nigeria, during which they were to discuss with General Abacha political instability in the West African country.

Mr. Mugabe said that they were mandated by other African heads of state last month in Kampala to discuss these issues with the Nigerian leader, and said the Kampala talks had been very fruitful.

"We had excellent discussions and did agree that indeed there is a way forward and that only through direct contact and in the spirit of togetherness can we find solutions to our problems," Mr. Mugabe said.

The African leaders that mandated them were moved by negative publicity by Africa's detractors, Mr. Mugabe said.

"The criticism of those who want to destroy Nigeria should not be allowed to succeed," the president said.

When Museveni was under colonial rule, the rest of Africa came to its assistance. "They came to us when we needed them," Mr. Mugabe said in his speech, drawing thunderous applause from the audience.

Among those present at the dinner were diplomats, some members of the provisional ruling council, ministers and other top government officials.

It was the first visit by either president to Nigeria since General Abacha came to power in November 1993.

Addressing the meeting, General Abacha urged African countries to rise to the challenges of emerging economic blocs throughout the world in order to improve their ailing economies.

Taiwanese president defies China before key party congress

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui accused rival China on Monday of aiming to "eliminate" his government, one day before the start of a key congress expected to nominate Mr. Lee to run for a second term in 1996.

"All the methods communist China has used, its military exercises, its criticisms — their aim is to eliminate the Republic of China (Taiwan)," Mr. Lee said in a speech to overseas members of the ruling Nationalist Party.

He said his controversial visits to other countries, which have drawn a storm of criticism from China, were not intended to boost his chances of being elected in Taiwan but rather to promote his country abroad.

"Their aim was very simple: to promote Taiwan. Nothing else," added a stern-looking Mr. Lee.

China has said Mr. Lee's diplomatic forays were a move toward independence for Taiwan and retaliated against his private trip to the United States in June by postponing high-level talks between representatives from Taipei and Beijing.

The visit also triggered a sharp decline in relations between Beijing and Washington.

China has threatened to use military force against Taiwan, which it regards as a rebel-held province, if the island 220 kilometres off its southeast coast declares independence.

Missile tests, which China has conducted in the sea north of this island twice since late July, have served to underline China's military threat and polarise political opinion in Taiwan.

At one end of the spectrum is Mr. Lee, whose defiance against Beijing sets him against important candidates in the presidential race who are calling for reconciliation with their giant neighbour.

The Nationalist Party congress on Tuesday and Wednesday was expected to appoint Mr. Lee as its nominee for the presidential election, although he has yet to say whether or not he plans to run.

Local stock market analysts interviewed by Reuters on 25, there are reports of other Chinese military exercises around the

Beijing.

Another key candidate, the chairman of Taiwan's top watchdog body, the Control Yuan, Chen Li-An, announced he was leaving the ruling party last week to pursue a presidential bid on the platform of better relations with the mainland.

Mr. Chen's departure was a major blow for the nationalists and sparked some analysts to talk of divisions within the ruling party's ranks, prompting Mr. Lee to call in his speech for unity and an end to factionalism.

Soldiers of the Marine Corps of the Chinese People's Liberation Army practise the island-landing strategies recently. In addition to missile and live artillery tests in the East China Sea north of Taiwan from August 15-Monday gave region (Reuters photo)



Indonesian business body shuns call for Australian boycott

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia's leading business group does not support calls for a boycott of Australian imports in retaliation for a series of flag-burnings last week, its chairman said Monday.

Chairman of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) Aburizal Bakrie said the growth of economic cooperation between Australia and Indonesia was more important than the import boycott threat initiated by the Indonesian Association of Importers (GINSI).

"I would like to see the economic cooperation with Australia grow and grow," Mr. Bakrie said.

Although it would be "business as usual," Mr. Bakrie hoped Australians would refrain from repeating the sort of flag-burning incidents seen recently.

"We hope that Australians will accept the Indonesian

way of life and people who honour very much the flag, but on the other hand we say that we should base our co-operation with Australia on the trade and investment activities," Mr. Bakrie said.

A series of flag-burnings in Australia by east Timor supporters which coincided with Indonesia's 50 years of independence has caused outrage here, with youth groups staging at least five demonstrations outside the Australian embassy in the last ten days.

Indonesia annexed the former Portuguese colony of East Timor in 1976, but the United Nations still views Lisbon as the administrator of the territory.

In the latest demonstration Monday morning, 15 protesters burnt placards at the Australian embassy gates here, one of which read "Make Australia Indonesia's 28th province."

Jiang takes centre stage on eve of Deng birthday

BEIJING (AFP) — The Chinese Communist Party propaganda machine stepped up a gear Monday to boost the image of President Jiang Zemin on the eve of the 91st birthday of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

The People's Daily ran two front-page stories calling for party cadres to study Mr. Deng's theories and those of his heir-designate, Mr. Jiang.

The president and party secretary general was given more prominence. And only celebrations, if at all, are expected for the birthday on Tuesday which has attracted much international attention.

Mr. Deng has not been seen in public for 18 months, fuelling regular speculation about his state of health.

One People's Daily article said political officials should give more attention "in the new period" to Mr. Deng's works on party construction. The "new period" is the phrase given to the transitional period between MR. Deng and Mr. Jiang that the party hierarchy is

trying to put in place.

"The theories of Deng Xiaoping on party construction are a powerful ideological weapon and a guide for action," said the party daily.

Mr. Jiang had a longer commentary devoted to him next to that on the patriarch.

Party cadres were told to "deeply study the speech by comrade Jiang Zemin on the reform of state enterprises."

Already published by major newspapers last month, the speech was made after several inspection visits by Mr. Deng's favoured heir to state firms in eastern China.

The critical financial state of many giant public companies is one of the main problems facing China as it follows Mr. Deng's orders to move toward a market economy.

The government knows it must carry out draconian measures to save the enterprises but is hesitant about sacking tens of thousands of superfluous workers in the companies, analysts say.

Mr. Jiang said in his speech that "urgent measures" were required.

But reports gave no other details except for the president telling local authorities to step up reforms to improve management.

Monday's commentary highlighted the need for "political and social stability" to pursue economic development. But it added no new policy details and analysts said it was just propaganda operation to boost Mr. Jiang's image.

No other senior Chinese leader appeared or were mentioned on the front page of the People's Daily.

No official ceremonies are planned for Tuesday's birthday but none have ever been held.

The architect of China's much-vaunted reform programme was last seen in public in February last year, for Chinese new year commemorations. Then, he could barely walk. A photo apparently taken of Mr. Deng on China's national day last October 1 showed him an enfeebled figure sat in a chair and wrapped in a blanket watching the fireworks.

Sahlin clear favourite for Swedish premier

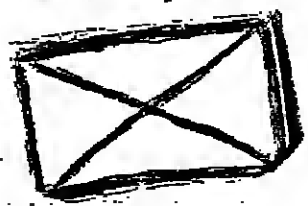
STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Mona Sahlin is the clear favourite to succeed Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, who has said he will resign next March, according to an opinion poll published on Monday.

The poll, in the newspaper Svenska Dagbladet, gave Ms. Sahlin 49 per cent backing among supporters of the ruling Social Democratic Party (SDP), which will decide on the new prime minister at a special congress next March.

Ms. Sahlin is a controversial, blunt-speaking figure who has the support of the youth and women's sections of the SDP, although her support has faded since the party formed a minority government after elections last March.

Coordination Minister Jan Nygren was in second place in the poll, with 19 per cent support. Agriculture Minister Margareta Winberg, another likely candidate, won 11 per cent of support in the poll, carried out over the weekend.

Mr. Carlsson, 60, announced on Friday that he was exhausted after more than 25 years in politics and wanted to retire.



World News

Jordan Times, August 22, 1995 5



A rescuer along with dead bodies near the wreckage of the passenger trains after collision in north India Firozabad town of Uttar Pradesh state on August 20 (Reuters photo)

Death toll exceeds 300 in India's worst train accident

FIROZABAD, India (AP) — Rescuers with cranes and blow torches sliced through the tangled remains of two passenger trains Monday while police searched for the signalman blamed for the worst train wreck in India's history.

At least 300 passengers died and 500 others were injured Sunday when the Puroshotam, express rammed the Kalindi railway station in northern India. The Kalindi express had stopped on the tracks after hitting a cow and damaging its brakes. A signalman gave the crowded Puroshotam a green light to continue down the same line, officials for India's state-owned railway said.

Police were looking for the signalman today. He vanished after the disaster at 2:45 a.m., just 15 minutes after he came on duty. "It is definitely human negligence of the railway staff," said M.N. Chopra, a divisional manager of the railway.

Rescuers searched for more victims today, using blow torches to cut through the train wreckage. Corpses were laid in rows in a muddy

field nearby. "The entire area was reverberating with cries and shrieks," said Manas Patnaik, 29, who was travelling from the eastern state of Orissa to New Delhi on the Puroshotam express.

"I stumbled several times on severed limbs and some people — I don't know whether they were sleeping or dead," Mr. Patnaik told the United News of India news agency.

Between the two trains there were about 2,200 passengers, most of whom were sleeping when the collision occurred. Both trains were bound for New Delhi, 185 miles north of Firozabad.

Sabodhi Kumar, Chopra, who was standing near the door of the Kalindi express when it stopped on the track, said he saw the other train approaching, but thought it was on another track.

"The next thing I knew, I was crushed under a seat and the coach had overturned," he said from his bed at the Sarojini Naidu Hospital, strapping the cast on his left shoulder.

By Monday afternoon, Mr. Chopra said 275 bodies had been recovered from the wreckage. News agencies

reported dozens more people died in hospitals of their injuries. Doctors and relief workers said at least 500 people were hospitalised with injuries and hundreds more were treated for cuts and sept home.

"Every time we pick something up, there's a body underneath it," Mr. Chopra said.

Press Trust of India news agency put the death toll at 350, but an army officer supervising the rescue operations said on condition of anonymity that the toll could be as high as 400 when all the cars are removed from the tracks.

The toll was the highest in the Indian railway's 142-year history, surpassing the 270 people killed when a train plunged into a river in 1981, said P.K. Bhandopadhyaya, the spokesman for the railway ministry in New Delhi.

The people killed in Sunday's accident included 22 teenage athletes returning from a training camp, and dozens of soldiers travelling with their regiments.

Two cranes untangled the 13 coaches that were crushed or jack-knifed off the track. Wreckage was

scattered for 500 yards on either side of the rails, a few hundred yards from the railway station of this industrial city.

Bodies were stretched out in rows in loosely tied bed sheets from the sleeper cars, then taken to a makeshift morgue in a large hall in town. Detached limbs and human debris were collected in plastic bags. Some relatives said the wallets and purses of the victims had been robbed of all the money they were carrying.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao expressed sorrow over the deaths and directed a senior government minister to supervise rescue operations. But in parliament lawmakers criticised the government Monday for not following the safety recommendations of committees that probed previous train crashes.

Nearly 17 million Indians travel by intercity rail every day.

It is the primary means of long distance transportation in a country where roads are poor and air travel is too expensive for most citizens.

World court says NZ files case against France

THE HAGUE (R) — New Zealand, in a bid to block France's planned nuclear tests in the South Pacific, on Monday asked the International Court of Justice to re-examine a 1974 nuclear test case against France, a court official said.

New Zealand has said it would seek an interim injunction to stop the series of up to eight underground blasts at Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia.

The court official confirmed New Zealand was attempting to reopen legal action, filed in 1973, against French testing.

"New Zealand has submitted a request for an examination of the situation in accordance with paragraph 63 of the court's judgment of December 20, 1974, in the nuclear test case (New Zealand versus France)," a court official told Reuters by telephone.

The official said New Zealand viewed the request as a resumption of the previous case.

Paragraph 63 of the 1974

judgment reads: "Once the court has found that a state has entered into a commitment concerning its future conduct, it is not the court's function to contemplate that it will not comply with it. However, the court observes that if the basis of this judgment were to be affected, the applicant could request an examination of the situation in accordance with the statute."

New Zealand and Australia filed proceedings against France over atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons in 1973.

The world court's 1974 judgment found that the applications had no object, since France had refused to appear at public hearings or file any pleas because it considered that the U.N. legal body lacked jurisdiction.

But the court also noted in its judgment that the objective of New Zealand and Australia had been achieved, since France had, in various public statements, announced its intention not to carry out any further

atmospheric nuclear tests.

As France subsequently withdrew its recognition of the court, the only legal option left to New Zealand is to try to reopen the old case, with specific reference to the commitment on future conduct in paragraph 63 of judgment.

In a further bid to block the tests, a group of European parliamentarians on Monday said they had signed a declaration calling for a commission of enquiry to decide whether France was taking adequate measures to protect the population of French Polynesia from radiation.

Paul Lannoye, a member of the Ecolo party in the European Parliament, said that 169 of its 626 deputies — from all groupings in the parliament except the French Gaullists — had signed the declaration.

Car blast outside French embassy in Oslo

In Oslo, a Norwegian environmental group blew

up a French Citroen car outside the French embassy in Oslo on Monday as a protest against France's planned resumption of nuclear tests, the group said Monday.

The Miljoeverbundeset (environmental protection group) said it exploded the vehicle as part of its campaign to boycott French products until Paris reverses its decision to resume nuclear testing in French Polynesia beginning next month.

Monday's action, which had been approved by Oslo police, was carried out in a controlled environment with explosives experts on hand. Only the car was damaged.

However, the explosion was powerful enough to cause embassy workers to look on in concern from their windows.

"We're also considering actions against car salesmen who sell French cars," Miljoeverbundeset leader, Kurt Oddekalv said.

Russians recapture police station seized by Chechen fighters

MOSCOW (R) — Russian troops backed by artillery and helicopters on Monday recaptured a police station in the central Chechen town of Argun from rebels who had seized the building on Sunday night, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

The agency quoted a military spokesman as saying: "The army operation launched to liberate Argun from Chechen rebels has been successfully completed."

TASS quoted Russian military officials as saying the decision to storm the building was taken after Chechen officials had failed to persuade 250 rebels inside to surrender.

The agency had earlier quoted chief Chechen spokesman Movladi

Udugov as saying the fighters were willing to lay down their arms and leave the building in Argun, just to the east of the regional capital

Grozny. The rebels had released four policemen they were holding hostage.

The crisis seems likely to deal another blow to the fragile peace process in Chechnya, rocked by eight months of conflict.

Both sides signed a military accord July 30 to end the fighting, but now accuse the other of trying to undermine it.

"I am sorry this all happened on the eve of a possible resumption of talks," chief Chechen negotiator Khodzakhmed Yerikhanov told TASS before the Russian attack.

Interfax news agency said troops shelled rebel positions around the station as helicopters circled the town.

"The Russians are firing kalashnikovs (assault rifles) and occasionally tank guns towards the police headquarters," Reuters television cameraman Dima Madorsky

reported from Argun.

"The town is covered in smoke. People are running away from the centre," Mr. Madorsky added.

Field commander Alaud Khamzatov, in charge of the rebel group, earlier told Reuters he was doing nothing wrong.

"I've been appointed military commander of Argun by (Chechen rebel leader) Dzhokhar Dudayev, and I'm doing my duty," he said. "I have come home and I am not going to leave."

Interfax quoted Mr. Khamzatov as saying: "We are ready to die. A man who has lost everything is afraid of nothing."

The agency said some civilians had died when the rebels took the building on Sunday night. Mr. Dudayev was quoted on Sunday as saying he wanted a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Russian officials said Mr. Khamzatov was an associate

of Chechen commander Shamil Basayev, whose men stormed a hospital in the southern Russian town of Budennovsk in June and took hundreds of hostages. More than 120 people died in the stand-off.

As part of an agreement to end that crisis, the two sides began the peace talks which led to the July 30 deal.

Under the agreement, the Chechens agreed to disarm in return for the partial withdrawal of Russian troops. But the process has been hampered by mutual distrust and continued clashes.

The accord was meant to pave the way for a political settlement to the conflict, including the tricky issue of the future status of the region which declared independence in 1991.

Moscow has ruled out letting the region secede, saying that would threaten the integrity of the Russian Federation.

38 women killed in fire after escape bid from Korean reform institute

SEOUL (AFP) — Thirty-eight women, trapped behind bars, died in an inferno on Monday after prostitutes and teenage runaways torched a jail-like reform home near Seoul in a desperate escape bid, police and news reports said.

The pre-dawn blaze at the church-run Kyonggi Women's Institute in an isolated area, 30 kilometres south of Seoul, also left 24 other women badly injured. Firemen rescued 72 unburnt.

The fire tore through the two-storey home, trapping many of its 138 inmates who had been asleep behind barred windows and locked doors, police said.

Television showed charred bodies stacked in a second-floor common bathroom of the brick and cement building, which housed young prostitutes and runaways, mostly teenagers.

"I lost consciousness, struggling among dozens of screaming girls trying to tear the bars off the windows," a 15-year-old survivor told newspapers.

"There was no freedom there. They just tried to get away," she added, explaining the escape attempt.

Most of the victims choked to death, police said, adding that 14 inmates were held in custody for questioning and five had confessed to setting their rooms alight in

the escape attempt. Police also questioned supervisors at the institute to try to verify allegations that the inmates had been handcuffed and beaten.

The girls at the home, sent there by police without being convicted of any offence, were confined for an average of 10 months and taught sewing, cooking, hair-dressing and domestic sciences under a social "rebirth" programme.

Police said the blaze had been started by some 20 inmates who tried to escape after beating up their 56-year-old overnight supervisor, Park Yong-Hee, in an act of "premeditated arson."

Witnesses said the would-be escapees stacked bed covers in six of the 30 rooms and set them ablaze simultaneously as the supervisor was wrapped up in a blanket and beaten by inmates.

Seven escaped through broken windows but were caught later, television said.

The blaze raged unchecked for two hours, completely gutting the building. Hundreds of firemen and police were rushed to the scene, but their efforts were hampered by toxic smoke and the locked doors, it said.

"Desperation seems to have been the motive. They had no freedom. They had no freedom," firefighter Hoe Se-Chang

said. A similar fire broke out in the government-funded institute last year, leading to the arrest of seven inmates who had complained of beatings and maltreatment.

The inmates were subject to strict reform therapy, watched by dozens of guards and supervisors.

Supervisors denied human rights violations, but television quoted witnesses as saying that "violators of rules" had been beaten and confined like prison inmates.

"A 42-year-old woman was sent out last year because of mental derangement caused by beatings," an unnamed former inmate was quoted as saying.

Television footage showed parents and relatives of the inmates, seeking news of their daughters, screaming and fighting with police after being denied entry to the building.

The Kyonggi Institute was one of South Korea's two main reform houses for prostitutes.

A major home which once housed 1,700 prostitutes in the capital was closed last year following controversy over human rights violations. Prostitution is illegal here but is widely condoned.

France denies reports that it supplied arms for Rwandan massacres

PARIS (AFP) — The French government on Monday denied reports that it continued supplying arms to Hutu forces after the start of massacres of hundreds of thousands of Tutsis there last year.

A foreign ministry spokesman said Paris had fully complied with an accord signed between the warring Rwandan factions in Arusha, Tanzania in August 1993, banning all weapons sales to them.

Reports by the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Belgian private television station RTL Sunday accused France of complicity before and during massacres of minority Tutsis by the Hutu majority in Rwanda in 1994.

But ministry spokesman Yves Douthiaux said Paris "stopped all arms supplies to Rwanda in compliance with the Arusha accord signed on August 4, 1993 between the Rwandan belligerents."

"France has completely complied with the terms of this accord," he said, adding that "no arms were supplied by France in April 1994 to the Rwandan government."

The BBC report, entitled the bloody tricolour and based on interviews with politicians, relief agency

officials and soldiers, said French complicity began with the deployment of troops in Rwanda in 1990.

The RTL report cited Colonel Luc Marchal, a Belgian member of the U.N. assistance mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) as saying that arms had arrived on board a French plane April 9, 1994, just three days after then Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana perished in a plane crash and extremist Hutu soldiers and militias began their orgy of killing.

Mr. Douthiaux said France had signed a military accord with Rwanda in 1975, as it had with a number of

African countries. "In the context of this accord, France supplied instructors to train army and police officers," he said.

Mr. Douthiaux added that both Britain and Belgium had sent troops in October 1990 to "protect Western nationals in Rwanda, who numbered about 5,000 at the time."

Referring to specific charges made in the BBC programme, he said that French troops sent in 1991 to Ruhengeri in northwest Rwanda "were deployed to evacuate Western nationals and not to interfere in the civil war as mentioned in the

BBC programme."

He also denied France acted as a country of asylum for alleged perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide. "In this context he referred specifically to Rwandan priest Wenceslas Munyeshyamba who has been charged in France with genocide."

The ministry spokesman added that France was developing its relations with the new Rwandan regime, in particular helping to strengthen the African country's judicial system, after concern expressed by rights groups such as Amnesty International.

Sri Lanka fighting leaves 13 dead

COLOMBO (Agencies) — The Tamil Tiger guerrillas ambushed an army patrol in north-eastern Sri Lanka Monday, killing one soldier for the loss of at least 12 of their own fighters, local officials said.

Gunmen of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked patrolling soldiers at Veerancholai in the Trincomalee district, triggering a heavy gun-battle, officials said.

"One soldier was killed and three others were wounded in the first round of fighting. Shortly after that, the troops retaliated and by Monday morning recovered the bodies of 12 rebels killed

by them," a military official said.

The fighting came as suspected LTTE gunmen hijacked 35 bullock carts belonging to Muslim villagers who had ventured into a jungle at Puvanasattu, officials said.

"The villagers were detained by the LTTE for a few hours and later released minus their bullock carts," the official said.

The LTTE is leading a protracted campaign to establish an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority of two million which is concentrated in the northern and eastern regions.

2 Karachi policemen shot dead in ambush by militants

KARACHI (AFP) — Unidentified gunmen shot two policemen dead and injured another in an ambush Monday, while three civilians were gunned down by sniper fire in the violence-plagued Pakistani port city, police said.

The policemen were attacked while patrolling the streets on motorbikes. The gunmen sprayed bullets on them from a car, a witness said. Three civilians were also injured in the attack.

The wounded constable was said to be in critical condition in hospital. Two civilians were reported killed in sniper shooting, while the bullet-ridden body

of another was found.

Officials and residents said the security forces launched a house-to-house search for arms and militants Monday in the eastern neighbourhood called Lines Area, after cordoning it off.

Hundreds of people were taken away in trucks for questioning, an official said. Residents said sporadic firing occurred in suburban Orangi township, where a vehicle was set ablaze.

Orangi has been tense since the killing by police there of two activists of Karachi's main opposition group, Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), on Sunday.

MQM represents Karachi's large Urdu-speaking community made up of immigrants who arrived from India after the 1947 partition of the sub-continent.

The party is locked in a tussle with the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto over alleged discrimination against the immigrants.

More than 1,300 people have been killed this year in the strife-torn city, where thousands of paramilitary troops are currently involved in a crackdown against mqm militants.

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Serving cause of women

IN A BID to make the exercise surrounding the upcoming world conference on women in Beijing more meaningful and fruitful, several international and regional reports on women rights have been prepared and promulgated. Because the Beijing meeting is not the first of its kind and many attempts have been made already to improve the lot of women worldwide but with little noticeable results, every effort should be made this time to make the new exercise more successful. As far back as 1975 when the international community held a mammoth conference on women rights in New Mexico City the community of nations has been busy articulating and adopting new guidelines to diminish discrimination against women in all walks of life. The New Mexico meeting was followed by another one in Copenhagen and a third one in Nairobi ten years ago. In spite of all these endeavours and other attempts by a number of regional and international fora, however, the plight of women remains essentially the same with only modest gains registered at times.

The latest report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the issue summed up the situation when it concluded that there was hardly a nation in the world where women were treated equally with men. Even in the most advanced countries in this field, the struggle for equality still has a long way to go before it attains its objectives. The Arab World fares very poorly on the scale of countries which accord women political and economic rights with Morocco and Algeria ranking only 85th and 87th respectively and the rest of the Arab states lagging much more behind. In this vein, women's earnings are generally 30-40 per cent less than men even in the most progressive states and their participation in the political life of their countries is at its best in the Scandinavian states where it reaches the rating of 30 per cent and drops to low four per cent in the Arab World.

Since the unequal treatment of women persists on a global scale and assumes ominous proportions in the Arab countries, we would like our concerned authorities to share with us their thoughts on the long agenda of the Beijing conference and their submissions on its principal items. We certainly cannot be proud of our record on women's participation in public life judging by their near non-representation in politics or business. Nor can we be happy about the mistreatment of women in terms of unequal pay for equal work. Of course we have not even scratched the surface when it comes to other manifestations of discrimination against women in other socio-economic areas. Suffice it to cite that women do not stand on equal footing with men on citizenship rights and individual freedoms. Crimes committed in the name of "honour" continue to plague our lives and cast a dark shadow on where women really stand in Arab societies.

There is not much time left before our governmental and non-governmental delegations proceed to the Chinese capital. Jordanians have yet to be involved in full in shaping official and non-official stands on the agenda of that important meeting.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily criticised the Palestine National Authority (PNA) for what he described as repressive acts against the Palestinian people and the media. Sultan Al Hattab said that the closure of Al Quds newspaper was the latest such incident in a long chain of repressive measures intended to stifle the voice of truth. Under the PNA rule, or through its influence, writers were jailed, newspapers closed and journalists banned from writing or reporting, said the writer. People living in Palestine are at a loss, and wonder which is more repressive: the rule of the Zionists or the PNA, which the writer said has been acting as security forces for the Jewish state. Demanding that all forms of repression against the Palestinians stop, the writer said that the PNA should realise that such actions can by no means serve the PNA itself, and neither can it help realise the Palestinian dream of freedom come true. The mass arrests the storming of homes and other mal-practices are not what the Palestinian people had sought through their long struggle for freedom, said the writer. He said that disappointed the Arab masses most was the silence of the leading PNA figures over such mal-practices that have frustrated the hopes of the majority of the Palestinian people.

A WRITER in Al Dostour said that he pitied the government whose efforts are currently directed towards crafting an opportune atmosphere for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit in October to achieve success because these efforts are drowned and completely overshadowed by the American war preparations in our region. Taher Al Adwan said that through its actions and propaganda campaigns against Iraq and through its military moves in the region the United States is running all chances for any investments in our region and subsequently any hopes for a permanent peace and security and stability.

The View from Fourth Circle

August 1990, August 1995 and the diplomatic full moon

THE CONSIDERABLE and very creative international press coverage of the asylum in Jordan of some prominent Iraqis led by General Hussein Kamel Hassan raises important questions about the real issues at stake in this episode. Since the tale is still being played out, we will have to wait for some of its ambiguities to be clarified and for its true significance to become clear. In the meantime, several questions and observations suggest themselves:

1. What is the real position of Jordan on the American-led desire to change the regime in Iraq? Conflicting signals have emanated from Amman since the start of the affair, with some statements to the press and symbols (notably the press conference at the Royal Court) hinting that Jordan would like to see a change in the Baghdad regime, and other statements and symbols (notably the prime minister's speedy consultation with Parliament) suggesting that Jordan will not interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. Mixed signals from Amman are either a highly sophisticated form of diplomatic navigation, or a sign of our daring but difficult desire simultaneously to serve two strategic goals: friendship, national affinity and economic gains from Iraq, and friendship, ideological affinity and economic gains from the United States.

2. Is this matter really about who rules Iraq or about with whom Jordan is allied? The extensive international media coverage has included a strong sub-theme about Jordan's realignment in the regional political landscape — allegedly away from Iraq, and towards the U.S., Israel, Saudi Arabia and pals. This is intriguing and, if true, important; but is it real or only imagined? Is it a fact of Middle Eastern geopolitics, or an American fantasy?

3. Is this, in fact, the last battle of the Gulf war, fought in political rather than military terms? Jordan's principled opposition to foreign militarism as the solution to inter-Arab conflicts was correct in 1990 and it remains correct today. It is not surprising to see Washington get excited about the possible downfall of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime, a goal towards which it has worked unsuccessfully for half a decade. Most Jordanians and Arabs share Western objection to, and even revulsion with, the brand of militaristic governance practised in Iraq today. That is not the question this week.

The question this week is: How does an unacceptable, violent Arab regime transform into something better and more humane? If foreign military intervention was inappropriate for resolving inter-Arab conflicts, is foreign political pressure also inappropriate for resolving domestic Arab governance issues? The answer must be an emphatic yes; because if we agree to play Washington's game of forcing changes in the Baghdad regime today, where will we be able to draw the line when Washington decides it

would like to change the regimes of other Arab states that it dislikes?

The Gulf war was not only about assuring the sovereignty of Kuwait; it was also about assuring the hegemonic interests of the United States in the Middle East — the effective American recolonisation of the Middle East, a century after the original French-British colonisation of the region. Jordan resisted that American objective somewhat in 1990/91, and we were severely punished for it through economic pressures and political quarantine. This week, we notice a pronounced American change in attitude to Jordan, with pledges of protection and support against Iraqi threats that are magically notable for being more visible in Washington than in Amman. Is Jordan being "rehabilitated" in American eyes for our crime of not riding the Gulf war bandwagon? Is the real prize in this affair really a change in regime in Baghdad, or a change in attitude in Amman?

4. Is it seriously considered in Washington and elsewhere that Hussein Kamel Hassan could be a suitable new leader of Iraq? If so — given his long track record of involvement in domestic and regional activities that Washington has suggested as being sufficient grounds for trials for "crimes against humanity" — what does this tell us about the seriousness of the international talk about holding people responsible for their past deeds? The message from this line of thinking is that any person who has been involved in regimes that systematically use violence can wipe away his or her past simply by changing sides and officially adopting Washington's ideological and moral flavour of the month.

5. How much official Jordanian thinking, if any, is reflected in the remarks of an unnamed "former political advisor to the King" who was quoted in the New York Times on August 17 as saying: "It is nice to be loved by the Americans. We need the American embrace to impress the Israelis and the Arabs. It helps in the quest to improve our image in the region, so what's wrong with that?"

The nature and consequences of "the American embrace" are really at the heart of this question for Jordan, and this is deeply reflected in the rather spontaneous, widespread expressions of unease in Jordan at the thought of our being used by the United States to pressure Iraq. If we are even perceived to be serving American diplomatic goals in Iraq at the expense of our pan-Arab sentiments and obligations, at a time when we already experience significant domestic debate about our policy towards Israel, we could find ourselves caught in an increasingly fierce ideological debate that would result in deep domestic political schisms.

6. The situation in which we find ourselves is very challenging in terms of political morality. We are somewhat

Precisely because there is a greater inclination among others to throw caution and reason to the wind and to jump onto any available bandwagon that promises a free ride and possible salvation, we in Jordan should resist the urge to seek sustenance or redemption in ideological bondage to either of the crazed camps that tempt us.

torn between two powerful forces: The instinctive understanding that our long-term, future well-being depends upon good relations with our large Arab hinterland, and the immediate desire to strengthen our economy by forging closer ties with Israel, the United States, Saudi Arabia and associated powerful ideologues and economies. Our national interest requires that we strike a difficult balance, one that simultaneously safeguards our moral and economic well-being, that generates an honourable balance of dignity and dollars. We were unable, or not allowed, to achieve that balance in the Gulf war five years ago.

Today, essentially the same actors are involved in yet another regional geo-political tug-of-war, but with several important differences from 1990: Almost all the principal actors are suffering severe economic stress today, most are feeling strong pressures for political change, and Jordan finds itself as much a prize as an actor in this new Arabian drama. August 1995 and August 1990 are rather similar in most ways for the Middle East, except for the fact that the poverty and panic factors are greater all around.

Precisely because there is a greater inclination among others to throw caution and reason to the wind and to jump onto any available bandwagon that promises a free ride and possible salvation, we in Jordan should resist the urge to seek sustenance or redemption in ideological bondage to either of the crazed camps that tempt us. We would do well to ponder again the lessons of 1990, and to work harder this time to affirm the humane, balanced, rational principles that have always made Jordanian statehood such an impressive and honourable — and Arab — enterprise. Just because the principal actors of this game are frenzied and hysterical beasts, we do not have to howl or froth with them at this moment of the diplomatic full moon.

Revelations about Israel's murder of PoWs shatter myth of purity

By Michael Jansen

ISRAEL IS experiencing, once again, a bout of soul searching over the behaviour of its armed forces. This time it is allegations that its army executed disarmed Arab prisoners in virtually all of the wars fought by the Jewish state since its establishment in 1948; allegations that will certainly harm its relations with all its Arab neighbours in the present period of peacemaking and normalisation of relations.

Most of the soul searching is being done by liberal, leftist Israelis who cling to a collection of myths spun by Israeli ideologues and policy makers with the aim of creating the illusion that "Israel is a state like no other," a state born "pure and sinless," a state with a "moral basis." For Israelis, this illusion has been essential, existential, even on both the international and internal levels.

On the external level, the Western powers who supported the Jewish colonisation effort in Palestine and the eventual occupation of this country by force, had to be encouraged to continue their backing and to underwrite the alien state thrust into the Arab homeland.

Thus, Israel had to forge its moral credentials by creating an illusion of "sinlessness," although the Jewish state was created — like the Boer state in South Africa, the U.S. in North America, most of the Latin states in South America and, at present, the Serb state in Bosnia — by the brutal ethnic cleansing of the native population. In the Israeli case, ethnic cleansing was a matter of both policy and practice produced by necessity and racism; necessity because a Jewish state could not be built on land populated by another people and racism because these "others" had to be dehumanised before they were expelled. Once ethnic cleansing was accepted, the killing of prisoners became standard practice. Thus, Israel's enemies became people to be either dispersed, like the Palestinians, or disposed of, like Egyptian or other Arab soldiers who became caught up in Israel's wars of conquest.

The combined armed forces of the Israeli state were called the "Israel Defence Force" (IDF), although Israel has fought four wars of aggression and one war of self-defence (1973) during its 47 year history. This fact, however, was never admitted until Israel attacked Lebanon in June 1982, when the then prime minister Menachem Begin stated that all of Israel's previous wars — with the exception of 1973 — were "initiated" or "preemptive" wars. That means wars of aggression

against its neighbours. This revelation, made at a military college, stunned the Israeli establishment and created and uproar in the media. But the uproar soon died down and the military maintained its image as a "defence" force.

The military, throughout Israel's brief history, has always been above criticism, "sacrosanct," "untouchable," protected by strict state censorship and the self-censorship exercised by its own cadres and the public. The IDF doctrine, which has protected the force, has been that of the "purity of arms," of fighting cleanly only in self-defence, of treating enemy soldiers and civilians according to the rules of war honourably. This doctrine was effective in creating the honest, honourable self-image of the Israeli citizen soldier and his admirable image in the eyes of Israel's external supporters. But it was a deeply flawed image, an illusion, because Israel's citizen soldiers were no better than and perhaps even, in some cases, much worse than their counterparts from other countries. But until recently, Israel and the IDF managed to cover up that fact.

The IDF rarely submitted itself to external inquiries (one of the exceptions being the Kahane Commission, which investigated the Sabra-Shatila massacres in 1982) and kept to itself most of its internal squabbles (although these broke the surface of Israeli public life in 1983 when the generals blamed each other for Israel's failure to predict the combined Arab attack which launched the October war).

Thus, Israelis have not often been treated to the spectacle of the IDF "letting itself down," as did the French army in its bloody repression of Algerian freedom fighters and the U.S. army fighting in Vietnam. The IDF only came under public scrutiny, by way of the media, during Israel's bombardment of Beirut in 1982 and during its iron fist repression of the intifada, when the present Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered troops to break the limbs of Palestinian protesters. And Israelis have considered these investigations

exceptional into IDF conduct, the product of "lapses" of its normal behaviour, from its dogma of "purity of arms."

But several years ago Benny Morris, an historian who has examined the mythmaking of the founders of the Jewish state, exposed Israel as an "ethnic cleanser" of Palestinians during its war of establishment. And now, former military men have described how they and their men killed Egyptian prisoners of war during the 1967 campaigns, while others (and historians) have revealed that the IDF killed Palestinian and Syrian prisoners during other engagements, since, according to the Israeli military historian Michael Bar-Zohar, the elimination of prisoners was "tolerated" in all of Israel's wars; and, according to the officers now speaking to the press, a matter of policy in some circumstances.

This should come as no surprise to Israel's neighbours, subjected to indiscriminate and not-so-indiscriminate Israeli attacks on and bombardments of Arab civilian targets over the past 47 years, leading to hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties. But for Israelis, wrapped in the cotton wool of the myths, the impurity of IDF practice has come as a shock. Former defence minister Ariel Sharon, the man responsible for the destruction of the village of Samu' and the bombardment of the open city of Beirut, called this debate of war crimes "a kind of national suicide" while Prime Minister Rabin, the commander who ordered the Palestinians to be driven out of Lydda and Ramleh, agreed.

Benny Morris has welcomed the recent revelations on the ground that Israelis are now willing to accept that they live in a "normal country with normal people" and they act the same as others in war, that is "viciously." But Israel is not a normal country with normal people.

Faulty economic policies

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

THE MINISTRY of Finance recently put before Parliament seven draft changes to the existing tax laws: A general sales tax adjustment law that would raise the sales tax rate from 7 per cent to 10 per cent; an income tax law that would reduce the income tax of corporations and investors; and an investment law that is supposed to encourage the flow of investments to Jordan. In justifying these proposed changes to the law, the ministry stated: "It has become necessary to review the different facets of the existing Jordanian tax system in order to stimulate savings, encourage investment, and reduce consumption and thus increase self-reliance within the frames dictated by the Constitution." The ministry went on to state that "among the most important of these frames are: 1) the progression of the tax burden; 2) the establishment of social justice and equality; and 3) the recognition of the taxpayers' ability to pay." (Al Dostour Newspaper, July 25, 1995).

After having read the draft general sales tax law, I came to the conclusion that once again rhetoric has no founding in reality. The intent of the law and the actual law itself were contradictory to say the least. For those who wish to ponder contradictions, I have put together the following comments.

There is a golden rule that is agreed upon by all schools of economic thought (not an easy task): "Do not raise taxes in times of recession. Jordan is in the midst of an economic recession: The official unemployment rate is 17 per cent and productivity is lower than it was 25 years ago. A sales tax is a tax like any other tax (and maybe worse than some as I will demonstrate later) in that it reduces the disposable income of the citizenry thereby lessening their ability to save, and 2) it is a source of domestic income to the government.

If the payment of taxes reduces a citizen's ability to save, contrary to the ministry's stated goals, why are we planning to increase the sales tax rather than reducing it in light of present

economic circumstances? This tax can lead to increasing price levels (inflation). Although the Ministry of Finance has sought to counter this effect by withdrawing excess money from circulation, inflationary pressure will increase. If inflation does occur then we will have the worst of all worlds — stagflation, unemployment with inflation, in which case an increase in the income tax rates would be preferable to an increase in the sales tax because the income tax would only affect employment.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the sales tax is the ideal tool from which it can be compensated for the decrease in tax revenue it would suffer as a result of proposed lowering of the income tax placed on corporations and investors. But a sales tax is a regressive tax in that it affects the poor more heavily than it does the wealthy. An increase in the sales tax contradicts points (1) and (2), that is, the goals of progressive tax costing and social equality mentioned in the Al Dostour article. These contradictions can be easily demonstrated by the following example.

Suppose we have two persons citizen 1 has a monthly income of 200 dinars and citizen 2 has a monthly income of 2000 dinars. Citizen 1's income level is close to the poverty line therefore he is poor. Citizen 2 makes in one month more than the per capita annual income of Jordan (1000 dinars per annum), therefore he is well off. Citizen 1 consumes all income; citizen 2 consumes only 50 per cent of his income and saves the rest. Both citizens pay a sales tax of 10 per cent on everything they consume (buy/rent), so citizen 1 pays 20 dinars a month in sales tax while citizen 2 pays 100 dinars. If we divide the sales tax payment by the respective incomes of both citizens we realise that citizen 1, the poor citizen, paid 10 per cent of his income in sales tax and citizen 2, the well-off citizen, paid only 5 per cent of his income in sales tax.

The writer is professor of economics at Mu'ta University. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

U.S. peace
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More suicides, stress show on Sarajevans

By Thomas G. Ginsberg
The Associated Press

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Anja Tomic started panicking the moment she thought about leaving Sarajevo. How would she live? Who would help her in the outside world?

"When they opened the doors to the concentration camps after World War II, people just stood there without knowing where to go," said the 31-year-old Bosnian aid worker. "I think maybe I had the same thing."

After facing Serb guns, physical deprivation and siege for three years, psychiatrists say some Sarajevans now may be suffering the same complex trauma as survivors of Nazi concentration camps.

Hospitals are reporting the highest rate of suicide attempts since the siege began. The number of people being treated for chronic stress, or "Sarajevo syndrome," has risen 20 per cent in the last year, doctors say.

Even a flash of hope from Croatia's defeat of its Serbs in recent days gave way quickly to cynicism, as Sarajevans expected more refugees and new attempts to carve up Bosnia.

"People have been disappointed too many times," says Dr. Zeljko Trogancic, deputy chief in the psychology ward at Sarajevo's main hospital.

"The main reason is that nobody knows anymore when it will all end, where

this war is going." Everyday, a few more people are killed or maimed by Serb snipers and shells. Fear of attack isolates people in their homes. Water, gas and electricity flow infrequently. Occasional deliveries of humanitarian aid only underline the truth: Sarajevo is like a prison camp.

With last spring's end of a year-long lull in fighting, residents — the best estimate is 280,000 people — tend to head home quickly after runs for water and food. Under a blazing summer sun, their faces are pale from spending most of their time indoors.

Unfulfilled promises of Western military protection have done more than kill hope. "They reaffirm isolation from the world," Dr. Trogancic says.

"I had a constant feeling like I don't belong with people outside," Ms. Tomic said of her first trip out of Sarajevo in two years. "It wasn't until I left that I realised that I'm not the same person I was."

Before her short February trip to Geneva for a conference, Ms. Tomic was seized by panic.

"I had the feeling that I shouldn't be alone for even five minutes because I would be completely lost," she says. "I was afraid of stepping onto the plane. ... Every little detail terrified me."

Ms. Tomic's dismal existence is her only reality, and it is oddly comfortable. "I feel like I have two persons in me constantly,"



A CITY SUFFERING UNDER SIEGE: A Sarajevan boy talks with a U.N. soldier. Children in the city often approach U.N. troops in the hope of receiving some sweets and chocolate (AFP photo)

she says. "One is fighting with complete body and mind against the war, against sniping, killing and blood."

"And the other one is getting used to it, because I'd probably go crazy if I didn't partly get used to something, to accommodate to it."

Kaz de Jong, a Dutch psychologist posted in Sarajevo with the international aid organisation Doc-

tors Without Borders, compares the reaction to the immobile silence that gripped some concentration camp victims on their day of liberation.

"I wouldn't be afraid to define (Sarajevo) as a concentration camp," he says. "Your actions are dictated continuously by somebody else. Your life is under threat continuously from shelling and sniping. Your physical conditions

like electricity, gas, water are at the whim of somebody else. Whether you get humanitarian aid or not is under the control of somebody else," Mr. De Jong says.

"The only difference is that you're not physically beaten here and there's no camp torture, no gas chambers."

Few doubt that most Sarajevans — particularly young ones — would bolt

from the city on liberation day. Indeed, a "brain drain" of talented professionals in the last year led the Bosnian government recently to bar anybody from leaving without hard-to-get exit papers.

But how people will cope with the dreamed-of liberation "is a big question mark," Mr. De Jong says.

Desperation has shown up in suicide statistics. After three years of war, hos-

pital admissions for attempted suicide are rising, Dr. Trogancic says.

"In the first two years, everybody's psychological energy was spent on surviving, on living," Dr. Trogancic says.

So far this year, his hospital has treated 20 cases of attempted suicide, the same number for all of 1994. Police do not release the number of successful suicides, which statistically

are thought to be about 10 per cent of attempts.

"When there is no power, no water, when everyday needs for living are in short supply and there is shooting, then come the suicides," Dr. Trogancic says.

"The situation has lasted too long," he says. "Right now, our biggest need is for surgeons. But after the war, the psychiatrists will have the big job."

U.S. peace plan for Bosnia in limbo

(Continued from page 1)

ilaterally an international arms embargo on Bosnia.

The U.S. delegation had just begun a tour of regional capitals last week to present the new proposals when France and the two other American envoys were killed.

President Bill Clinton vowed to push ahead with the peace plan. But the tight timetable of talks has been pushed back by more than a week, threatening the momentum that had built up.

Mr. Holbrooke briefed Bosnian President Ilija Zvezdovic only fleetingly in a meeting after the ill-fated diplomats' vehicle ploughed off a mountain road. He had to push back a scheduled second meeting with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, due last Sunday, by eight days.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher broke off his holiday to start replacing the fallen members of the team and to meet the diplomats' remains when they arrive in Washington.

The deaths deprived Washington of key negotiators at a time when its plan was meeting a warmer reception than expected from U.S. allies and local leaders alike.

Washington launched the initiative after the Croatian army recaptured a fifth of its country's territory from Serb

rebels, significantly changing the balance of power in the region.

The plan is aimed at ending the killing and mass exodus which have swept the former communist state of Yugoslavia since its violent break-up in 1991.

Diplomats have said Washington's plan concedes land to separatist Serbs in Bosnia, promises Serbia an end to economic sanctions if it recognises its neighbours and threatens punishment for any faction which tries to scupper the package.

A suggestion that the Bosnian government could trade the U.N. "safe area" of Gorazde, the only remaining Muslim pocket in eastern Bosnia, for land elsewhere has been scrapped for now.

Yet Gorazde's future looks far from secure. Bosnian Serb shells killed three children there on Sunday without any U.N. response, despite a promise to protect the enclave by calling in North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) air strikes.

A U.N. spokesman, citing the opinion of the U.N. command, said on Monday: "One shell, no matter how lethal it is, does not constitute an attack against a U.N. 'safe area' which would merit a response by NATO."

Egypt demands price for PoW killing

(Continued from page 12)

stand to defuse public outrage, experts told AFP.

Confronted with the public's indignation and to defuse an opposition campaign, the government will find itself obliged to demand that Israel pays war damages and offers apologies," Talaat Mussallam, a retired general and military expert, said.

Emad Gad, a specialist in Israeli affairs at the centre of political and strategic studies at Al-Ahram, said: "The government will ask Israel for an apology and compensation, but not the extradition of the criminals to avoid a bitter confrontation with Israel."

Opposition groups are already demanding a break in ties between Egypt and Israel, which signed a peace treaty in 1979.

"At the very least we have to chase out the Israeli spy who calls himself ambassador and demand the extradition of the criminals to try them in Egypt," the pro-Islamist pap-

er Al-Ahram said. Meanwhile, an Egyptian lawyer, Ahmad Al Shami, has begun legal proceedings in a bid to win \$100 million of compensation from Mr. Rabin for the families of the prisoners.

"The government can't stand by idle. It knows that as general elections draw closer to November the opposition will condemn the absence of a strong official reaction in the prisoners' affair as a failure to stand up for the dignity of its citizens," Gad said.

The opposition could also win more support for its resistance to closer relations with Israel, he said.

"If a poll was conducted today, 98 per cent of Egyptians would be against normalisation with Israel," Gad said.

An opinion poll published in Al-Ahram weekly in December showed that 63 per cent of Egyptians refused to visit Israel and 71 per cent boycotted Israeli products.

By John Madeley

ALEPPO, Syria — Jan Valkoun has a mission to collect. But it is a mission with a difference. Each year he spends around six weeks of his time tramping through fields, remote countryside and arid areas of West Asia and North Africa, plucking wild plants out of the ground.

As he walks along, Dr. Valkoun's style is to pull up a single wild plant, usually of wheat, barley or related species, every 20 metres or so. At this stage, he has no idea what he is looking for in a plant.

Jan Valkoun's walking habits may seem bizarre. But a lot is at stake. On his wild plant collecting could depend nothing less than food supplies of the future.

Dr. Valkoun is head of the genetic resources unit at the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA). Based in Aleppo, northern Syria, ICARDA is part of a

worldwide network of agricultural research stations which are trying to help Third-World to increase and sustain the output of basic food crops. One of ICARDA's roles in this scientific network is to improve the wheat, barley, lentils and faba beans (so-called "poor man's meat") which serve as the "daily bread" for millions in West Asia and North Africa. But there is a huge problem.

The population of the region is growing fast and land is becoming degraded. The demand for food is rising and scientists have to continually breed new varieties of crops. The old, genetically diverse varieties maintained by farmers over millennia are being replaced with improved but uniform varieties. "Our crops become genetically eroded," the scientists say. At the

same time, agriculture is advancing into marginal habitats where the wild relatives of the crop plants live — the wild plants are displaced by the crops and lost. This is another form of genetic erosion. According to the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation, about three-quarters of the diversity of agricultural plants have been lost since 1900.

Scientists say that it is difficult to measure the exact loss of these plants, but that the pace is not slowing down. As the population grows and more farmland is taken over for housing, as people cultivate marginal land, and as too many sheep and goats graze the land, wild crops continue to decline.

To breed new varieties of crops, scientists "cross" existing varieties of plants with new lines. And this is

growth in the world, and this is putting severe pressure on land. "The loss of genetic diversity could be higher in this region than in any other," believes Jan Valkoun.

Wheat, barley, lentils and fruit trees originated in the region. "But the wild plants are losing their space," he said, "as nearly every piece of land is now cultivated."

But why do we need this genetic diversity? Modern varieties are developed on experimental stations under optimum growth conditions. Research at ICARDA and elsewhere has shown that these varieties are not adapted to harsh environments; the wild relatives are.

To breed new varieties of crops, scientists "cross" existing varieties of plants with new lines. And this is

where the collecting activities of Jan Valkoun come in — because adapted plants from the wild can be ideal for the "crossing."

When Dr. Valkoun returns with his collection, he examines each plant for its characteristics in the laboratory and in the field at ICARDA's experimental farm. What he is hoping to find are traits which are different to the plant varieties already held in ICARDA's "genebank."

But every now and again, Jan Valkoun's spirits soar as he sees a wild plant with different traits — because then he could be on to a winner. The wild plant could be crossed with an existing variety to breed a new variety that could help to feed the people of the region and beyond.

Dr. Valkoun stresses that not enough of the wild

plants have been collected, and that it is vital to gather as many of them as possible before they are destroyed. Their loss could be a catastrophe.

The plants are vital for food: supplies throughout the world, not just in West Asia and North Africa. For, while countries in the Western world are rich in material terms, they are poor in wild plant diversity. The world's food supplies ultimately depend on the breeding and development of new crop varieties — and the raw material for this is mostly in Third World countries.

Jan Valkoun is one of a small number of scientists throughout the world who specialise in collecting wild plants. On their skills, a great deal depends. The millions who shop for bread and pasta may not know it, but collecting wild plants is vital, if there is to be food to buy in the future.

ICARDA

Mission for food

Ekeus arrives for talks

(Continued from page 1)

officials during his visit here. Asked whether U.S. officials had asked to sit in on his meeting with Gen. Hassan, Mr. Ekeus said he was not in contact with anybody, stressing that he was acting under a mandate from the Security Council.

Mr. Rawabdeh told reporters that Mr. Ekeus informed him of the outcome of his visit to Iraq and the "positive attitude" of the Iraqi authorities in facilitating his mission.

Iraq invited Mr. Ekeus to Baghdad after the defection of Gen. Hassan, saying it would divulge to him information that it said the defector had hidden from the U.N.

Baghdad media assail U.S.

(Continued from page 1)

sisterly and neighbourly nation."

Al Thawra also accused the United States on Monday of attempting to heighten tension in the Gulf.

"The U.S. is back, aggravating the situation, politically, militarily and media-wise against Iraq," declared the newspaper.

It said U.S. claims that Iraq was moving troops near its borders "are absolutely empty and are not based on fact or reality."

The U.S. has dispatched aircraft carriers and troops to the Gulf region within striking distance of Iraq and brought forward the date of regular joint exercises with Kuwait to discourage what it termed as threatening movements by Iraqi forces.

Al Thawra newspaper said Washington's talk of unusual movement of Iraqi troops exposed what it called the ignorance of the U.S. government.

Suicide blast kills four in Jerusalem

(Continued from page 1)

ground with a lot of people on top of me, screaming 'let us out of here,' and crying...there was blood all over the place."

Authorities identified two of the victims as an Israeli policeman and a 26-year-old Israeli woman. A third victim was identified as an American tourist, but officials did not release the name until family members could be notified.

The remaining bodies had not been identified by Monday evening, and police were investigating the possibility that one was the suicide bomber. Jerusalem police chief Arieh Amit said the condition of the woman's body suggested she could have been holding a bomb.

The father of Alia Abu Ghalya, 20, a resident of the West Bank village Bethany, was summoned by police to try to identify the woman's body, family members told the Associated Press. Miss Abu Ghalya's relatives said she had left home secretly short after midnight and had not returned.

The leaflet issued on the Al Quds Radio said the bombers would remain anonymous but used the masculine case in referring to the "martyr" who carried out Monday's attack.

The attack came a day after Israel lifted a 10-day closure of the Palestinian-ruled Gaza Strip, which had been sealed because of fears of a suicide attack. Following Monday's attack, the army closed off both the West Bank and Gaza until further notice, barring tens of

Suicide blast kills four in Jerusalem



Ultra orthodox Jews from a burial society collect remains of the bodies from the wreckage of a bus, where a bomb exploded Sunday (AFP photo)

thousands of Palestinians from jobs in Israel.

If the bomber was a woman, it will change the way Israeli police and soldiers approach Palestinian women, who are not usually treated with suspicion at roadblocks leading to and from the occupied territories, Police Minister Moshe Shahal said.

"It means that we have to see them as potential attackers," he said.

Several hours after the blast, a melee broke out at the scene, with hundreds of angry demonstrators screaming "Rabin is a murderer" and "death to the Arabs."

The anonymous caller to Israel Radio's Atab service said Hamas' military wing had "prepared a crusade

that would last until the Israeli elections, scheduled for November 1996. He said it was because "Rabin has declared a comprehensive war against Hamas."

The authenticity of the claim could not immediately be verified, and Hamas spokesman Imad Faluji in the Gaza Strip declined comment.

Israel's Channel 2 television said the explosion was caused by a pipe bomb of three to four kilograms of TNT.

The road was covered with glass and pieces of foam from the bus, and the stench of fuel filled the air. Members of an ultra-orthodox burial society, some wearing orange safety vests over their traditional long black coats, pick-

ed up fragments of human flesh.

A body covered with an orange blanket, with one thin leg protruding, lay in the middle of the street several hours after the blast. Wounded passengers lay on sidewalks. A soldier was taken away in an ambulance, his face torn and bloodied.

The back end of the bus was a twisted cobweb of poles and metal. The roof was ripped off like the peel of an orange, but the engine was still running. Emergency workers climbed over the charred wreckage, searching for bodies.

Right-wing Jewish settlers said they would hold protests at intersections across the country, in a repeat of their actions two weeks ago.

Higher oil prices wipe out Oman's first-half deficit

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — The rise in oil prices in the first half of 1995 has wiped out a projected deficit in Oman's budget and boosted the economy by more than five per cent, according to Omani officials.

"There was a balance between spending and revenues in the first half of this year," said Mahmoud Al Jarwani, director of the Muscat stock exchange.

"The budget did not include any deficit during this period due to higher earnings. It could have even recorded a surplus," he told the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Corporation Television on Sunday night.

Mr. Jarwani provided no figures but Oman had projected a 1995 budget deficit of around \$800 million. Revenues for the whole year were estimated at \$4.8 billion and expenditure at \$5.6 billion.

Oil prices averaged around \$17 in the first half of 1995 compared with nearly \$15.5 in the first half of 1994.

The price increase boosted the revenues of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) by around \$5.8 billion in the first half of 1995, according to bankers.

All GCC states — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — have forecast budget deficits this year but bankers expect the shortfalls to be lower due to the oil price improvement.

Experts said Oman's income was also boosted by an increase of around 40,000 barrels per day (b/d) in its crude oil output, to 850,000 b/d.

"Other positive indications during the first half included a growth in the gross domestic product by around 5.4 per cent," Mr. Jarwani said.

He said such developments coupled with economic reforms in the non-OPEC Gulf nation, pushed the stock market to a record level of performance.

Last week, the stock index reached its highest ever level of 155.10 points and turnover during the first half hit a record \$144.3 million.

Meanwhile, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) newsletter reported Monday that Oman has in-

cluded foreign firms to bid for licenses to develop oil reserves held in a total of 13 onshore and offshore exploration blocks.

Oman aims to increase foreign investment in its vital oil sector to offset maturing oilfields which are reliant on expensive secondary recovery techniques to even maintain current output of 850,000 b/d oil analysts say.

MEES reported that Omani ministry of petroleum and minerals (MPM), has forwarded bid documents to interested companies and will allow prospectors to view existing geological and geophysical data on the available blocks from Oct. 7.

"A total of 13 exploration blocks consisting of substantial territory relinquished by major operator Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) are already open and some additional acreage released smaller producer U.S. Occidental have been put on offer for full hydrocarbon exploration and production sharing agreements," the Cyprus-based newsletter said.

Companies have to send MPM sealed bids for the blocks, which should include details on work programmes, financial commitments and production splits, by Feb. 17 next year.

Most of the exploration blocks on offer are onshore and in the south of the country, including promising acreage close to Oman's borders with Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Offshore blocks located in the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea are also open to interested investors.

MEES was upbeat about the attractiveness of the blocks offered by the MPM.

"Now that it has finally gotten off the ground, this latest upstream play — the first major relinquishment by PDO in many years — is sure to attract worldwide attention," it reported.

Eight groups of foreign companies already work in Oman but only account for less than 10 per cent of Oman's total oil output.

Non-OPEC Oman has oil reserves of 5.2 billion barrels.

Belgrade's diplomacy restricted by economic challenges

BELGRADE (AFP) — Cafes are full and shops well stocked but the rump Yugoslavia's hands are tied by its rapidly dwindling economy which, analysts say, has restricted its diplomatic dealings in the Balkans crisis and encouraged a positive response to peace plans.

For Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, the lifting of crippling international sanctions has become the driving force behind all negotiations.

A new American peace plan, discussed at length by Milosevic and visiting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke Friday, is believed to offer a full abolition of sanctions rather than the easing offered by the "contact group" of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States.

The Yugoslav economy has been on a downward spiral since the international trade embargo was slapped on it three years ago and exacerbated by the influx of thousands of Serb refugees fleeing Bosnia and Croatia.

Industrial production has slowed down to such an extent that it only amounts to 35 per cent of its 1989 output, and now remains stagnant. Half the active population has no work and the currency, the new dinar introduced early last year, is again depre-

ciating.

Before introducing the new currency in January 1994 at a rate of one new dinar to one German mark, Yugoslavia held the world record for inflation running at the staggering rate of 313 million per cent.

This year prices rose by 40 per cent over six months and inflation was expected to reach 90-100 per cent.

In contrast average salaries only increased by 17 per cent and the budget deficit, largely wiped out by reforms in January 1994, is creeping up again. Pensioners and those fortunate enough to have jobs are often paid late.

Meanwhile, the black market is flourishing and now represents nearly 50 per cent of the gross domestic product, according to economic analysts.

But the social security coffers are empty and Serbia, not wanting to further increase its budget deficit, is ill-disposed to spend money on the latest influx of refugees fleeing the Croatian offensive in formerly-Serb held Krajina.

Some 160,000 people surged into Serbia at the beginning of the month, swelling the numbers of about 400,000 refugees already in the country since "ethnic cleansing" began three years

ago.

The only think of light for these people, many of whom arrived with their tractors, lies in agricultural production.

Thanks to agriculture, the rump Yugoslavia has been able to hold its head above water, one diplomat said. But the country, which was the first of the former socialist countries to embrace a market economy, has had its transition blown to pieces by the war and the embargo.

However, it is not just Yugoslavia which has been affected by the embargo. On Friday a spokesman for the Russian foreign trade ministry admitted the sanctions were costing Moscow \$5 billion a year. Before the embargo, Belgrade was one of Russia's top 10 trading partners.

Another ministry official, speaking anonymously, said Russia would sign several economic cooperation accords with Yugoslavia during a meeting of a joint economic commission Tuesday.

He did not say when the agreements — to include Russian oil deliveries to Belgrade and building a gas pipeline — would come into force, nor how Russia would get around the May 1992 embargo.

Russian grain harvest seen at lowest in thirty years

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's grain harvest may drop to 67 to 69 million tonnes this year due to drought and shortages of fertilisers and equipment but the government has not yet decided to resort to imports, a senior official has said.

The forecast by first deputy agriculture minister Magomedagir Abdul Basirov, down from last year's output for 81.3 million tonnes, could mean that Russia will bring in its worst crop in 30 years.

"Grain output this year may be expected to total 67-69 million tonnes," Mr. Abdul Basirov told a news conference. "But Russians will not go hungry. Our government, and our president, will never allow this."

The disastrous harvest in drought-hit central Russia may be partially compensated for by a good harvest in Siberia but Mr. Abdul Basirov said some imports could be required.

No decision has been taken as of today to buy any quantity of grain abroad," he said. "But I don't think there will be colossal purchases."

Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zavarukha said earlier this month that there would be no centralised state imports but commercial firms could make some purchases.

Mr. Abdul Basirov estimated last year's grain imports at three to four million tonnes, a modest amount compared with previous years. Russia imported about 11 million tonnes in 1993 and 25 million in 1992.

It has been withdrawing from international grain markets in recent years as demand for livestock feed has

fallen sharply due to reduced herds. Russia also lacks the cash to pay for big purchases.

Any wheat buying this year could worsen an already tight global supply situation.

Chicago wheat futures hit 15-year highs for harvest time last month on worries about tight world stocks and U.S. crops but prices have slipped as weather concern and export demand faded.

Mr. Abdul Basirov said the ministry was changing its harvest forecast practically every day. Previous official forecasts predicted the harvest would total 75 to 78 million tonnes.

The latest forecast is close to the 1965 level of 66.3 million tonnes.

"I consider that, with the forecasts that we have today, we will have to import some grain," Mr. Abdul Basirov said, without giving any figures.

This year's crop problems have been caused mainly by a severe drought in central Russian growing areas in May and June and by shortages of fertilisers, pesticides and farm equipment, he said.

Mr. Abdul Basirov, who is also head of the Federal Food Corporation (FCC), said about 1.5 million tonnes of grain had been bought so far from domestic producers, including 500,000 tonnes for federal reserves.

The FCC, responsible for federal reserves, expects to buy 9.5 million tonnes of grain this year. But it is struggling to find finance.

Domestic grain prices have been rising sharply and Mr. Abdul Basirov indicated that the costs could be passed on to consumers. "We will not go hungry but as for prices, it's difficult to say," he said.

China to pass new bankruptcy law next year

BEIJING (AFP) — China will complete a new bankruptcy law in 1996 in advance reform of loss-making state firms, but the document will continue to focus on avoiding closures to reduce "negative effects," Xinhua said Monday.

The financial and law committee of the National People's congress is now drafting the new law, which is expected to be completed early next year, the report said.

Among the guidelines of the law will be a requirement to reduce "the negative effects of bankruptcy to the minimum," by emphasising the role of mediation and enterprise restructuring, it said.

China's first bankruptcy law, passed in the mid-1980s, has been little used amid official concerns that massive unemployment could cause social unrest.

Some 25 million workers are estimated to be redundant in the inefficient state sector, which lost 33.6 billion yuan in 1994. Only one third of state enterprises are making a profit.

While the new law is to comply with international practice by covering all kinds of enterprises, it will contain a special section on state-owned firms to "take the specific conditions of China into consideration," Xinhua said.

The law also seeks to define the relations between the government, enterprises and courts in handling bankruptcy cases, stipulating that official departments may not intervene in the procedures, the report said.

World gold demand grows strongly

LONDON (R) — World demand for gold showed strong growth in the second quarter of 1995, rising over 15 per cent to 663 tonnes from the same period last year, the World Gold Council (WGC) has said.

The WGC monitors around 75 per cent of the world's markets and said the overall growth reflected strong investment interest in Japan and good demand generally throughout the Far East.

"The first half of 1995 has seen a continuation of the strong overall growth trend in demand for gold which began in most of the world's major markets in the second half of 1994," a WGC spokesperson said.

Developed-country gold demand in the second quarter was up 18 per cent to 234 tonnes and in developing countries offshore rose 11 per cent to 429 tonnes. Japanese demand was up 51 per cent in the second

quarter to 87 tonnes, taking year-to-date offshore to a record 164 tonnes.

"In addition to the explosive growth in (Japanese) investment demand, jewellery demand for the first half was 14 per cent ahead of the same period last year," the WGC said.

Among developing countries, there were strong second-quarter increases in Indonesia (up 38 per cent) and Malaysia (up 26 per cent).

Demand in Turkey (up 48

per cent) and Saudi Arabia (up 17 per cent, continued to recover in the second quarter, it added.

But in Europe, jewellery demand fell four per cent in the period mainly due to weakness in German and Italian markets.

The World Gold Council is a non-profit association, funded by leading gold producers worldwide, with headquarters in Geneva and offices in major markets around the world.



"When it comes to romance, my Stanley is an animal...the kind you find on the side of the highway!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YURL
ORVAB
DECSON
BUESAD

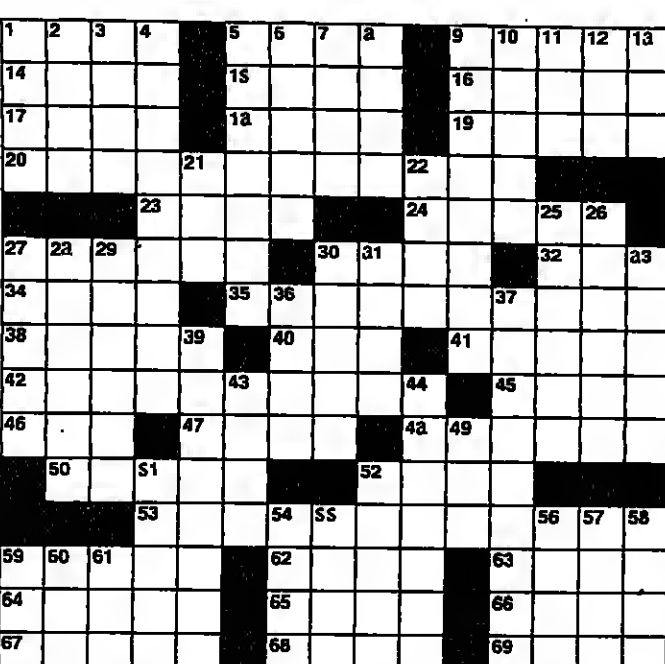
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: FEWER NOISY NIMBLE DEBTOR
Answer: A good place to do some reading — BETWEEN THE LINES

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia Yates

- ACROSS
- 1 Polliwog's pop
 - 2 Ruth
 - 3 Persian Gulf native
 - 4 Unemployed
 - 5 Brit's expression
 - 6 Canonical hour
 - 7 City on the Dnieper
 - 8 Lose interest
 - 9 Like a protuberance
 - 10 Everywhere
 - 11 Dingbat
 - 12 Spaghetti sauce
 - 13 "A — bread"
 - 14 Arabian port
 - 15 Knack
 - 16 "The King"
 - 17 Everywhere
 - 18 Tantalize
 - 19 Accomplished
 - 20 Tanker
 - 21 Everywhere
 - 22 Pastures
 - 23 Ivy League student
 - 24 Barney or Betsy
 - 25 Gridiron event
 - 26 Belt holders
 - 27 Lawyer: abbr.
 - 28 Everywhere
 - 29 Craters of the Moon locale
 - 30 Jai —
 - 31 Big rig
 - 32 Had
 - 33 Bridle part
 - 34 Skater Heiden
 - 35 Cognizant
 - 36 Ping follower
 - 37 Stuff



- DOWN
- 1 "Kon"
 - 2 God of the Valkyries
 - 3 Porters
 - 4 Manila
 - 5 — more than one can chew
 - 6 Strain of flu
 - 7 Dance or owl
 - 8 Gave the once-over
 - 9 Veiled remark
 - 10 Haley work
 - 11 Plus
 - 12 Tchrs'. gp.
 - 13 Sicily, e.g.: abbr.
 - 14 "Scooby" (cartoon)
 - 15 Ready for business
 - 16 Followed
 - 17 Trying time
 - 18 Carpenter's item
 - 19 "Anna Christie" creator
 - 20 Musical direction
 - 21 Seed covers
 - 22 Pedestal part
 - 23 Succinct
 - 24 Puts in
 - 25 Sweetbriars
 - 26 Headset part
 - 27 Pug or Roman
 - 28 Lambasting
 - 29 Blackish bean
 - 30 Alternate
 - 31 Whiz kid
 - 32 Distort
 - 33 One of the fats
 - 34 Miles of movies
 - 35 Put forth
 - 36 Pile base
 - 37 Give — whirl
 - 38 Grackle
 - 39 Alias letters

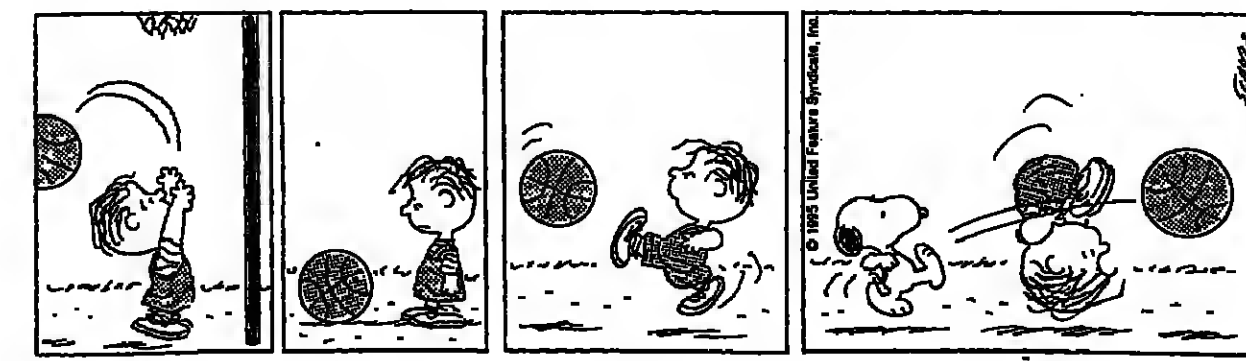


- Yesterday's puzzle solved:
- SEAL BELEM ANTS
ADBE AGENA NORA
CAUGHT RED HANDED
ONT UTES AMUSE
MET ARIL
SKATER GRAS ESS
ESAR GHJ ANKA
ASWHITEASASHEET
LEAR ESHE AERIE
AYN ANTA ALMOND
DUDE SMU
ONCE IN A BLUE MOON
SCAR CHAIR AUTO
SANE YARDS DREW

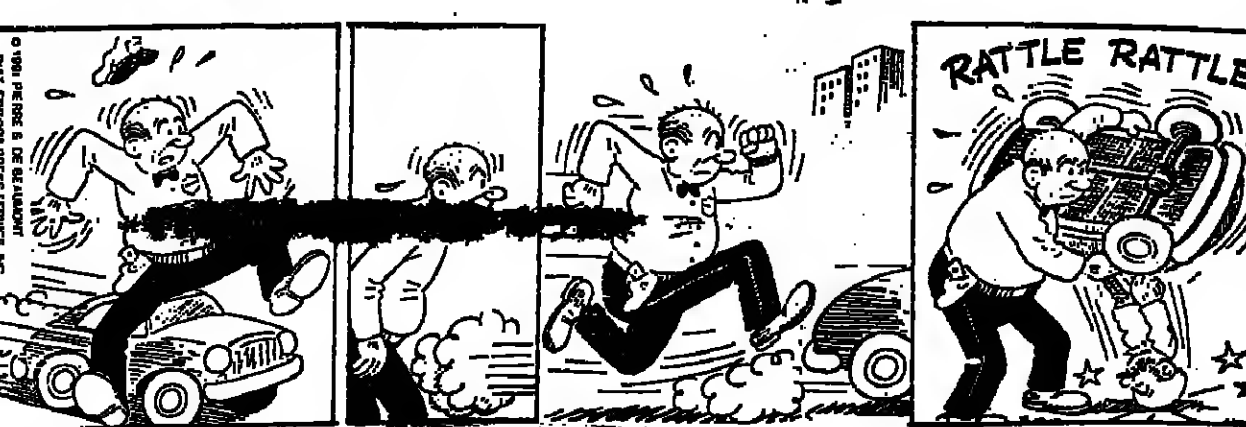
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carole Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Situations arise today which could bring your cherished wishes closer to you. Take it easy tonight and analyze your progress.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try to make the conditions at home more as you would like them during this morning. Do nothing to disturb harmony.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can easily contact certain individuals today who can help you greatly. But be direct with them. Drive with care on the highway.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Elevate your consciousness today so that you can have more of the fine things of life very soon towards your success.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You see everything in a more optimistic light today and you can accomplish a great deal, provided you plan wisely.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A plan you have must be well thought out today if you are to gain the added success which means so much to you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Bigwigs can be very favourable to you today and you can easily build up your assets. Get out socially with close friends this evening.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make sure you impress a higher-up with your capabilities and then you can become more successful today.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Many new ideas are coursing through your mind today which should be made a note of so that you will not forget them.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be more alert to new ideas and methods of operation today and start working on them, but do not make changes this evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Being with bigwigs is the best way to make progress today so be ethical and loyal. Be very cooperative today.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day to get your environment in better shape so that you will have more comfort and be able to work more efficiently.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

China to pass new bankruptcy law next year

BEIJING (AFP) — A new bankruptcy law will be passed in China next year, according to a senior official, who said the law will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

The financial and legal reform of the country's bankruptcy law is now in the final stages, the official said. The new law, which is expected to be completed next year, will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

Among the changes, the law will be a landmark in the country's economic reform. The new law, which is expected to be completed next year, will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

China's first bankruptcy law, passed in 1988, has been little used. The new law, which is expected to be completed next year, will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

Some 25 million yuan are estimated to be at stake in the bankruptcy law. The new law, which is expected to be completed next year, will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

The law also seeks to fine the relations between government, enterprise and courts in handling bankruptcy cases. The new law, which is expected to be completed next year, will be a landmark in the country's economic reform.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierse, Astrologer, Carroll High Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Situations arise which could bring you closer to the things of life you want. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try to make the most of the day. You may find a way to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can easily find a way to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Elevate your consciousness today so you can have more of the things of life you want. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

LEO: (July 22 to August 22) You can easily find a way to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make sure you are in a position to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

AGNITARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Make sure you are in a position to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

APRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Make sure you are in a position to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

QUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Make sure you are in a position to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

ISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make sure you are in a position to make things better for yourself. Take it easy tonight and see your progress.

IRTHSTONE OF AUGUST: Golden Quartz

Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Sale of new telephone directory to begin Sept. 1, '95

STARTING SEPT. 1, 1995, new telephone directories will be available for sale at the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC), the minister of post and communications has announced.

The directories will cover the Greater Amman region and will be sold for JD 6. The minister expects the distribution of telephone directories for the government to begin on Oct. 1, 1995 at JD 4 per copy.

The first batch of 20,000 telephone directories for Greater Amman was delivered to the corporation this month and further batches are expected to follow steadily.

The minister said the corporation is now preparing arrangements to distribute the directories quickly and without difficulty to telephone subscribers (Al Rai).

TRADING COMPANIES wishing to publicise their activities in a directory to be distributed to the participants in the Amman economic summit should fill a special form available at the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

Another form is available to those wishing to suggest projects that can be implemented, in cooperation with foreign companies, in commercial areas.

Both forms to those interested should be collected before Aug. 30, 1995 (Al Rai).

TRANSFORMING THE whole of Aqaba into a free zone at present will be very costly for the state with a slow-growing return, a study by the Royal Scientific Society shows.

Noting that the basic components to transform Aqaba into a free zone were available but needing development, the study recommended transforming parts of Aqaba into free zones at the present stage.

Upon removing all hindrances, the study said, the whole of Aqaba can be turned into a free zone. The study evaluated the feasibility of establishing three free zones: on 30,000 dunums on the southern coast, on 4,000 dunums in the airport area and on 30,000 in the Qawrair area.

The study recommended that light, non-polluting industries be licensed in the airport area, assigning the southern coast for heavy industries and assigning the Qawrair area to agricultural and livestock projects.

Also highlighted was the importance of private sector contribution to basic investments in the proposed area, such as in setting up free trade zones on land, air and sea crossings of Aqaba and on the crossings to the proposed free zones areas (Al Rai).

THE SOCIETY of produce exporters has decided to form a delegation to travel to Russia, Poland and Latvia to hold talks there on importing Jordanian vegetables and fruits.

The mentioned countries are considered as promising to take Jordanian farm products due to high population density and high prices for fresh produce (Al Dustour).

THE MANAGER of a large transportation company expressed astonishment over a statement by the minister of transport that the Jordanian land transport fleet cannot face the challenges of the coming era.

The manager said that the fleet of trucks and refrigerator-trucks was still in good condition despite being more than 40 years old. He said that modernising the fleet at present would be very costly as truck-owners cannot afford to replace their vehicles.

The manager added that if the ministry insists on its view for modernisation, it would be throwing thousands of truck-owners and drivers into poverty and ranks of the unemployed (Al Dustour).

Dry Britain turns heat on water firms

LONDON (AFP) — Drought-hit Britain, baking in one of its hottest and driest summers on record, is increasingly turning the heat on newly-privatised water firms for failing to cope with the crisis.

In particular some of the utilities are being accused of wasting massive volumes of water themselves through leaky and unmaintained pipes, while paying their directors and shareholders enormous bonuses.

"We are very concerned that a number of companies appear to have failed in their statutory duty to provide water to their customers for domestic purposes during this hot dry weather," said Alan Bonker, deputy head of industry regulator Ofwat.

Some 30 per cent of the country — from Yorkshire in the north to Cornwall in the southwest — is now under water restrictions.

Amid comparisons with the 1976 drought, helicopter squads have even been set up to monitor water restrictions. Two farmers were caught red-handed Sunday watering their crops, and could be fined up to \$20,000 (£13,000).

The government Monday issued a report urging a whole range of possible further restrictions on water usage — including toilets with limited flushes and low-pressure showers.

Dubai Islamic Bank presses on with capital rise

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) — The Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) has invited shareholders to subscribe to the third instalment of capital rise that will make it the biggest bank of its kind.

The management, in an announcement published in local newspapers Monday, said subscription to the \$2.5 million dirham (\$14.3 million) increase would open on Sept. 1 and run through the month.

"We invite all shareholders to subscribe to the third instalment of the capital increase during the specified period of time," it said.

In 1994, DIB agreed to double its paid-up capital to 420 million dirhams (\$14.4 million) to face growing operations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other Muslim countries, according to officials.

The increase was also in line with instructions by the UAE central bank to the Gulf country's 47 banks to boost their capital base to meet adequacy standards set by the Bank for International Settlements for banks worldwide.

DIB officials said subscription to the fourth and last instalment of the capital rise would end in March and it would turn the bank into the world's biggest Islamic bank in terms of capital and assets.

Like other UAE banks, DIB was hit by the collapse of the Abu Dhabi-controlled Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) as it had 300 billion dirhams (\$817 million) in deposits with BCCI.

The problem prevented DIB from distributing profits to shareholders in 1991 and 1992. In 1993, it approved a cash dividend of six per cent after it made a net profit of 17 million dirhams (\$4.63 million).

In its latest balance sheet released in March, DIB reported a surge in net earnings to 26.9 million dirhams (\$7.32 million). Assets also grew by around eight per cent to 5.48 billion dirhams (\$1.49 billion).

The Dubai government owns 12 per cent of DIB while Kuwait has a 10 per cent shareholding and the rest is held by local private investors.

The bank charges a percentage of the profits from the projects it finances as it does and deal in interest, which is hanned by Islam as usury.

China to invest \$12b in eight carmakers

BEIJING (AFP) — China is to invest 100 billion yuan (\$12 billion) in eight key car manufacturers over the next five years as part of a plan to restructure the sprawling sector.

The eight companies include Sino-foreign joint ventures such as the Shanghai Volkswagen Automobile Corp., northeastern Changchun's No. 1 Motor Works and Volkswagen Co., Guangzhou Peugeot Automobile Co., Beijing Jeep Co. and Wuhan Aeolus-Citroen Co., the report said.

The remaining three are the Tianjin Daibao Automobile Co., the Changan Suzuki Automobile Co. and the Guizhou Skylark Automobile Corp., which produce cars under licensing agreements with foreign firms.

The government is to offer preferential policies in the areas of duties, loans and overseas funds to the firms, the report said, adding that it would freeze approvals of new light-duty truck production from 1997 in line with a development policy for the vehicle industry released in July 1994.

The policy, aimed at developing the fledgling sector into a pillar industry by 2010, outlined a plan to restructure some 120 firms into a handful of major conglomerates while refocusing output on to family cars.

Sedans now account for only a small proportion of the 10 million vehicles that ply China's roads.

While output of cars stood at just 250,000 in 1994, out of a total vehicle production of 1.3 million units, and is expected to rise to 350,000 this year, the figure is targeted to soar to 4.2 million units in 2010.

By that date, production value should hit one trillion yuan, Xinhua said.

The agency said the government had already taken some measures to strengthen the performance of the eight companies now protected from foreign competition by import taxes on cars of some 150 per cent.

The government is encouraging the companies to organise inter-regional groups by combining assets.

Sony, BBC link up on digital television

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Sony Corp has agreed to cooperate with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), British Telecommunications PLC and other companies to introduce digital terrestrial television in Britain, Sony said Monday.

A spokesman for the Japanese electronics conglomerate said other members of the development group would include U.S. electronics firm Motorola Inc. and two private British TV stations, Channel 4 and ITV.

"The aim is to develop an open and competitive market in service provision, receivers and conditional access to ensure rapid implementation," Sony said, adding that the group was open to more applications for membership.

Last week the British government announced that Britain's existing four terrestrial television stations would be joined by at least 18 new digitally transmitted channels by 1998, after new frequencies were allocated.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE	PRIV.	CLOSING
ARAB BANK PSC	420	93105	221.000	222.600
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	3250	14765	4.555	4.550
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	3200	4360	1.240	1.240
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	800	2004	2.520	2.510
THE HAWASIN BANK	2623	19497	5.655	5.720
JORDAN KISRAH BANK	15906	15906	1.000	1.000
JORDAN CILB BANK	1770	2053	1.270	1.380
ARAB JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	500	1900	3.000	3.000
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	2300	8701	3.770	3.810
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	500	2075	4.150	4.150
BURKHAH BANK	1350	5231	3.890	3.880
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	3100	12677	4.080	4.120
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	5500	5330	1.060	1.060
PULLADHRA INVESTMENT BANK	1250	2995	1.600	1.600
BANKS SECTOR	32861	186534	INDEX NUMBER: 183.22	CHANGE: +0.477
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	100	270	2.700	2.700
ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	250	650	2.600	2.600
INSURANCE SECTOR	350	920	INDEX NUMBER: 133.33	CHANGE: 0.007
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	31891	52200	1.630	1.640
VEHICLES OWNERS PREPARATION	241	1595	6.600	6.620
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	320	1758	5.500	5.500
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	4050	8911	2.190	2.210
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONSUMERS HOTELS	700	1540	2.220	2.200
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	2050	6641	3.200	3.250
JORDANIAN SECURITIES INVESTMENT HOLDING	1542	1542	1.190	1.250
SARAA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	5950	8057	1.160	1.050
SERVICES SECTOR	46442	82244	INDEX NUMBER: 127.46	CHANGE: +0.384
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	975	21216	22.900	21.760
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	16194	59970	3.670	3.730
JORDAN PHARMACEUTICALS	750	2295	3.060	3.060
THE JORDAN PORT	1000	5001	5.000	5.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	2801	26550	9.470	9.510
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	3119	15772	5.070	5.060
JORDAN DATA	200	500	2.500	2.500
ARAB DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	7100	55351	7.890	7.790
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	730	730	4.740	4.730
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	3844	20840	5.450	5.470
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	19000	9275	480	490
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	300	750	2.600	2.600
NATIONAL INDUSTRIES	872	980	1.010	1.010
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1350	2943	2.180	2.180
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	250	1063	4.250	4.250
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	500	1800	3.570	3.600
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1115	4662	4.200	4.200
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	2100	6982	3.350	3.330
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	1550	3199	2.050	2.070
INTERNATIONAL TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	950	1371	1.390	1.390
ORION CHEMICAL & VEGETABLE OIL INDUSTRIES	1674	3486	2.080	2.090
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	66675	244764	INDEX NUMBER: 128.70	CHANGE: +0.424
GRAND TOTAL	146328	514462	INDEX NUMBER: 156.03	CHANGE: +0.447
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET			95089	
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET			78940	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

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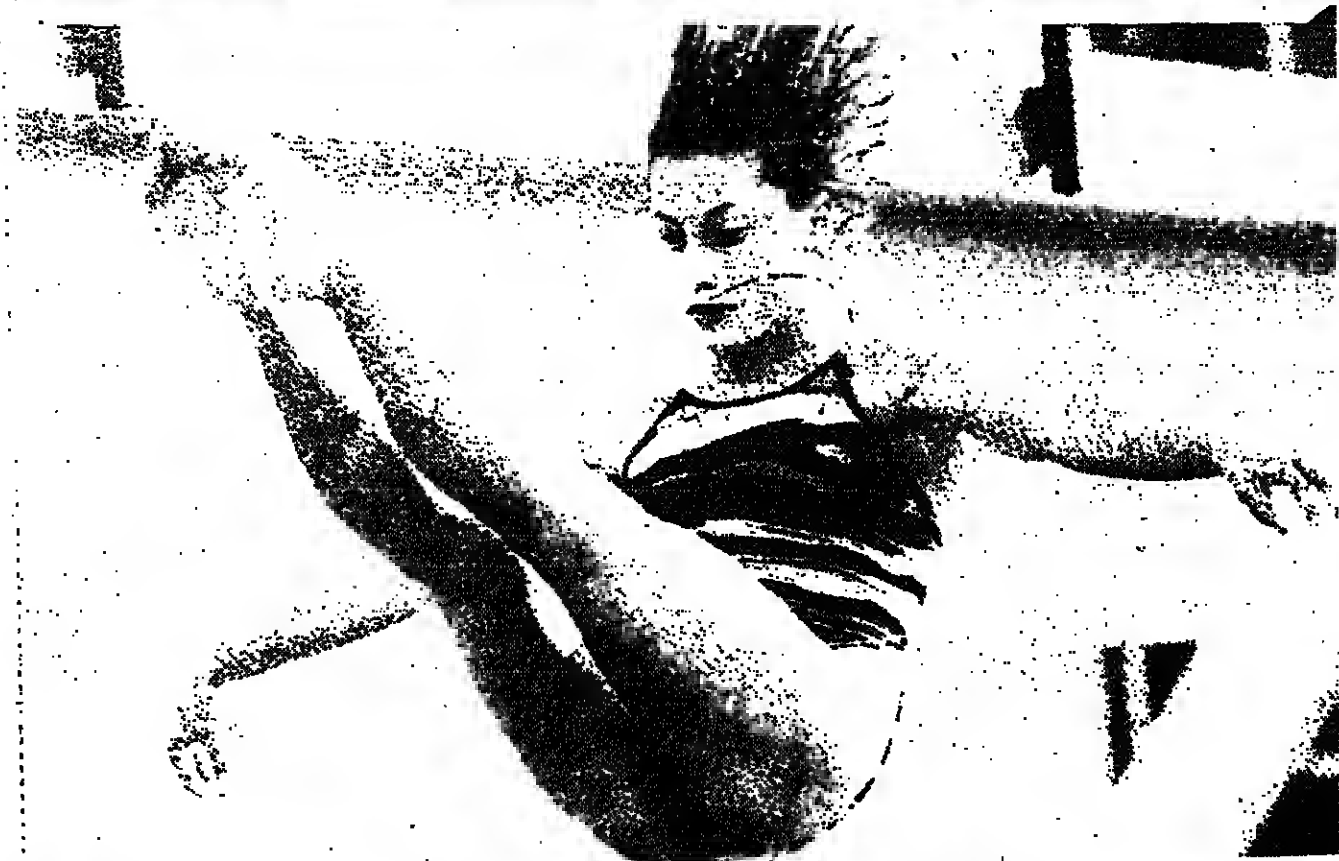
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Russia's Yulia Pakalina performs a jump from the three-metre jump-board at the 22nd European swimming Championships (AFP photo)

European Swimming Championships Wetzig reclaims highboard crown

VIENNA (R) — Ute Wetzig triumphed for the second time to six years to lead a German one-two in the women's platform diving final at the European Swimming Championships on Sunday.

Wetzig, who first won the title in Bonn in 1989, kept her nerve while all around her faltered to clinch the gold on the 10-metre highboard ahead of fellow former East German Conny Schmalfuss.

Wetzig carried the second-lowest points total forward from Saturday's four-dive semifinal but quickly made good the deficit from that inauspicious position, seizing the lead after the second of the five final dives.

The victory embellished an already glittering array of European highboard medals for the 22-year-old blonde diver, who took gold in 1989, bronze in 1991 and silver in 1993.

Defending champion Svetlana Timoshinina of Russia saw her hopes of retaining the title dashed in the third round with a poor reverse 2½ somersaults.

But she rallied bravely in the last two rounds to rise from 10th place and take the bronze ahead of Ukraine's Elena Zhupina.

Fellow Russian Alla Tarasova, the 1983 champion, squandered her medal chance with an indifferent fourth dive and had to settle for fifth.

Italy's Francesca D'Oriano, top qualifier from the preliminary rounds, was less than half a point behind Wetzig with two rounds to go but dropped completely out of contention with a disastrous reverse 2½ somersaults and finished eighth.

Alexei Akatiev brought Russia their fourth title of the 22nd European Championships with a runaway victory in the men's 5km long-distance race in a canal near the river Danube.

Akatiev, 25-km bronze medalist in last year's World Championships, swept clear soon after the halfway mark to win by a vast margin of more than a minute from Christof Wandratsch of Germany and Samuele Pampana of Italy.

The opposition failed to perturb Wetzig but a persistent wasp unsettled her as she went into her third dive.

"It landed on my arm, and was buzzing around my ear. It disturbed my concentration," she said. "The judge allowed me to restart and the

wasp finally left me alone." Wetzig said her team mates and coaches had helped her recover her confidence after the shortcomings of her performance on Saturday.

"I really have to thank them for building me back up."

She said she had also had poor preliminary round results before winning in 1989. "I can remember how down I felt then too."

Germany were top of the medals table at the last European Championships in Sheffield but had to wait till the fourth day of competition here before Wetzig gained their first title.

Timoshinina said she was disappointed at her failure to retain the title.

"I was a bit nervous at the start. I wanted to achieve a lot, I wanted to dive better. It was more a psychological thing. I was very tense," she said.

In the 5-km event, Wandratsch and Pampana scrapped for the silver stroke for stroke down the return 2.5 km and were repeatedly warned to swim further apart by a race official in an accompanying boat.

Wandratsch blamed the Italian for not keeping his

distance. "It was a bit unfair of him," he said. Akatiev won in 55 minutes 00.30 seconds, with Wandratsch second in 56:06.80, just 3½ seconds ahead of Pampana.

Van Almsick Arrives

Swimming superstar Franz Van Almsick swept into the Austrian capital Sunday surrounded by expectations of world records and gold medals.

Having emerged from a secluded training camp in Bavaria, the 17-year-old Van Almsick was haunted by camaraderie from official accreditation to the first training session.

She tried to speak casually with Steffen Zesner, her 27-year-old boyfriend and nearly every move at practice was under intense scrutiny.

The show will start for real when she gets into the pool for competition Tuesday morning in the 100-metre freestyle trials.

She will hardly get out of it for the rest of the week. Van Almsick aims for seven gold medals in all freestyle events from 50 to 400 metres and three relays.

Ghana win Under-17 World Championship

GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador (R) — Ghana beat Brazil 3-2 in the final of the World Under-17 championship on Sunday to win the competition for the second time.

Playing with verve and style, Ghana, champions in 1991, took a two-goal lead in the first half but had to survive a late Brazilian recovery before claiming the title.

Brazil, aiming to become the first South American side to win the tournament since it began in 1985, created the better chances early on but fell behind in the 39th minute.

Brazil goalkeeper Julio Espindola failed to hold a shot by Ghana right back Patrick Allotey and Emmanuel Bentil scored from the rebound.

Worse was to come for Brazil when Ghana midfielder Abu Iddrisu scored five minutes later with a powerful drive

from 25 metres to give the Africans a two-goal halftime lead.

Brazil pulled a goal back through Juan Santos two minutes into the second half but one minute later Bentil scored another goal from close range to restore the two-goal lead.

Ghana spent the next half hour stroking the ball around in midfield but relaxed towards the end and allowed Brazil back into the game.

Brazil struck the crossbar in one attack and pulled a goal back in the 90th minute with a superbly-taken individual effort by Marco Antonio Freitas but Ghana held on for the title.

100 injured in Brazilian stadium riot

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Around one hundred people, including 22 policemen, were injured as rival soccer fans fought a battle on the field after the final of a junior soccer tournament in Sao Paulo on Sunday.

Dozens of fans broke down the fencing around the field at the Pacaembu stadium and attacked each other with sticks, bricks, iron bars and pieces of wood after the match involving the junior teams of Palmeiras and Sao Paulo, two of Brazil's leading clubs, police said.

Players ran for the dressing rooms and team sources said that three were hit by stones thrown from the terraces. Once the fighting had died down, Palmeiras, the winning team, returned to the pitch to collect their trophy.

One fan, who has not been identified, was in critical condition with head injuries, police said.

In the most shocking incident, television pictures showed one fan smashing a piece of wood over the head of another fan who was on the ground, apparently already injured.

The injured man was trying to get up as he was hit. Another fan had tried to drag him off the field but gave up under a hail of missiles. After being hit on the head, the injured man got up, staggered off the field, crashed into a fence and collapsed.

One television station repeated the scene at regular intervals with the caption "wanted".

In another incident, a Palmeiras fan was saved by a policeman after being set upon by a gang of around one dozen Sao Paulo supporters, who kicked him and beat him with sticks.

Initial reports had put the injury toll at 50 but police said later Sunday that 100 people needed hospital treatment. Most were discharged after treatment but five were detained, police said.

The riot, which lasted around half an hour, began after Palmeiras scored five minutes into sudden death extra time to win the under-19 match 1-0.

Palmeiras fans climbed the fencing around the pitch to celebrate and began making provocative gestures at the Sao Paulo supporters on the terraces.

The enraged Sao Paulo fans broke down a piece of fencing, rushed onto the pitch and began the battle.

Palmeiras striker Adalton suffered a deep cut behind the ear while two Sao Paulo players were also hit by stones thrown by fans as they attempted to escape.

The pitch was littered with debris and seats had been ripped out of the stands after the riot.

The Brazilian championship match between Corinthians and Bragantino, due to be held in the same stadium later in the day, was postponed.



Monica Seles returns a ball in her final match in the Canadian Open (AEP photo)

Seles caps sensational return with Canadian Open title

TORONTO (AP) — In the end, there were a flood of emotions that Monica Seles had held in check until now.

Seles had just completed a remarkable first week back in tournament tennis Sunday, demolishing Amanda Coetzer 6-0, 6-1 to capture the Canadian Open.

And there she stood, crying. "I just can't believe it," she said. "Not playing in such a long time and then playing so well. It's unbelievable."

"There were so many emotions to get to this point. The two years were so hard. From that day to this day — what a difference."

Returning to competitive tennis almost 2½ years after she was stabbed during a tournament in Hamburg, Germany, Seles dominated the Canadian Open. She seemed to have lost none of the skills that made her the No. 1 player in the world.

Her plan was just to get in some matches before the U.S. Open, which begins its two-week swing from Monday. But her game was so strong that instead of a warmup, it turned into a walk to the championship.

Seles said she never expected that.

"To be able to come out and play great tennis and enjoy it," she said. "It's quite amazing."

It's not as if the Hamburg episode has been erased entirely. "There are flashbacks," she said. "On long points, I start thinking. Then I tell myself, you can't do this. You're in a match. Just go out and play great tennis."

"Reality is still there. I can't forget that. The reality is it happened. It will always be there."

This tournament was planned as a tentative first step back for her. In a field that included top players like Steffi Graf, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Mary Pierce and Gabriela Sabatini, she expected only to use it to get accustomed again to tournament surroundings and conditions.

But her game was surprisingly powerful all week, her serves and returns consistent and strong. She had every shot in her arsenal working to perfection, breezing to the final with straight-set wins over Kimberly Po, Nathalie Tauziat, Anke Huber and Gabriela Sabatini.

As she had all week, Seles dominated the match with Coetzer. The petite South African

had simplified Seles' way to the championship by knocking off four seeds players, including Graf, Pierce and No. 4 Jana Novotna. When she encountered Seles, however, it was no contest.

The closest Coetzer came was to force three break points on Seles' first service game in the opening set. Each time, Seles won the next point to keep the game going, and finally won it. The game consumed six minutes. The next five took just 22 more as Seles mixed power with touch to take control.

"I didn't feel intimidated by the hype around Monica," Coetzer said. "She just didn't allow me to play my game. She doesn't give you a lot of time. You have to get used to how fast the ball comes at you. You get to a point where you're confused. I wasn't sure what to do."

When Coetzer managed to hold her serve in the second game of the second set, it ended a streak of 18 straight games won by Seles.

For the tournament, Seles lost just 14 games, never dropped a set and was broken just 74 games in five matches, setting a tournament record for least number of games played by a champion. The old record was 85, set by Pam Shriver in 1987 and matched by Sabatini in 1988.

Sunday's match lasted 51 minutes. Only once did Seles require more than an hour to dispose of an opponent. She needed just 4 hours, 41 minutes of total playing time to win the title, averaging 56.4 minutes per match.

Except for a sluggish start against Anke Huber, she dominated her opponents.

It was the 41th victory in the last 43 matches for Seles, who had been dominating the women's tour before the incident at Hamburg. There was a long debate about how she should be ranked upon her return before the players agreed to give her a co-No. 1 spot with Graf.

For the final, fans hung two banners at the York University tennis centre. One said: "Forget the co-ranking, Monica you're No. 1," and the other said: "Monica the real No. 1."

All week, Seles seemed to confirm those opinions. And on Sunday, she punctuated them with her 33rd career tournament victory.

Survivors report on missing climbers

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Two weary Spanish climbers, who survived an attempt to scale K-2, the world's second highest peak that claimed their three countrymen and famous British climber Alison Hargreaves, limped off the plane at Islamabad Sunday and were whisked away by embassy officials.

Overcome with emotion the two wept as Spanish embassy officials rushed to greet them, helping them manoeuvre through waiting reporters.

Speaking briefly through an interpreter Lorenzo Ortas Pont and Jose Antonio Pepe Garces — leader of the 5-member Spanish expedition — said brutal winds plagued

their climb.

"Reaching the summit if K-2 there was a terrible wind," they said.

Three Spaniards — Javier Escartin, Lorenzo Ortiz Monson and Javier Olivar — were among seven, including Hargreaves, who died last Sunday somewhere after the 8,000-metre mark of the 8,560-metre (28,251-foot) summit of K-2.

It's now not clear whether an avalanche or high winds

swept the climbers from the mountain.

Earlier reports blamed an avalanche, but as survivors arrive in the mountain town of Skardu they say a blinding blizzard struck last Sunday killing the mountaineers.

On Saturday a helicopter rescued Pont and Garces from the base camp on K-2 and airlifted the two to Skardu, where they caught a commercial flight for Islamabad.

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In this highly competitive auction, South had the opportunity to be a genius. A pass of five diamonds

would have resulted in an unsinkable contract. However, we do not blame that player for correcting to five hearts.

West reasoned East had to have club values for the opening bid and elected to make matters easy for partner by leading the ace of clubs and continuing the suit when East signalled with the king.

The moment of truth had arrived. East decided to lead up to weakness and shifted to the king of spades. A

grateful declarer happily won the ace, drew trumps and ran diamonds to make the rest of the trick.

There were two good reasons why East should have ignored the adage. First, with two aces West would surely have doubted five hearts. Secondly, if West did not want to doable, the correct defense would have been to cash the ace of spades at trick two, then lead another club.

Look what happens if East switches to a diamond at trick three! The best declarer can do is overtake the queen of diamonds with the king and try to cash the ace. Unfortunately, East ruffs and declares over-ruffs. Declarer can get back to the board with a club ruff to try to cash a high diamond. But East ruffs again, stranding declarer with a spade loser. Down one.

The pitch was littered with debris and seats had been ripped out of the stands after the riot.

The Brazilian championship match between Corinthians and Bragantino, due to be held in the same stadium later in the day, was postponed.

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Ninja Turtles 3
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U.S. asks Kuwait to replace Iraq as oil supplier for Jordan

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau on Monday asked Kuwait to consider replacing Iraq as a source of oil for Jordan under a plan to weaken Iraq, a member of parliament (MP) said.

Mr. Pelletreau told Kuwaiti officials that Jordan needs to be provided with oil and be compensated for the commercial interests it might lose from closing its border with Iraq, according to the deputy who was briefed in the talks.

"Mr. Pelletreau conveyed this to Kuwait today," according to the deputy who asked not to be named. Kuwait said it will base its reply on what other Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia decide to do, the MP added.

A U.S. embassy official in Riyadh told AFP that Mr. Pelletreau was to have discussed possible aid for Jordan from Saudi Arabia during his meeting with King Fahd late Sunday in Jeddah, but did not elaborate.

The MP said if Kuwait decides to supply oil to Jordan, it will not announce it publicly for fear of stirring up lingering Kuwaiti anger at Jordan for its perceived support for Iraq after the 1990 invasion of the emirate.

A government official who requested anonymity said before the start of talks with the Kuwaiti officials, which included the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, that Kuwait would study any U.S. proposal to supply oil to Jordan.

Under an exemption to the U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq after the invasion, Iraq can export 70,000 barrels of

oil per day to Jordan.

Kuwait Foreign Ministry officials said Mr. Pelletreau was also to discuss what both countries have termed unusual troop movements inside Iraq.

Washington on Sunday sent the first contingent of 1,400 U.S. soldiers to Kuwait for exercises aimed at dissuading Iraq from any attack. The war games are due to begin next week.

It was not immediately known when the contingent of 80 troops would arrive.

The official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) had no word on the subjects discussed by Mr. Pelletreau but U.S. diplomats have said the envoy was trying to rally support for U.S. plans to further isolate Iraq.

Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah also attended the meeting. Mr. Pelletreau was accompanied by Mark Parris, a special assistant to President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Pelletreau left shortly after 1200 GMT for an undisclosed destination. On Sunday evening he met King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in the Red Sea port of Jeddah.

The U.S. government has said it would like Jordan to stop buying Iraqi oil, one of Baghdad's few economic links to the outside world.

Mindful of this, Baghdad has refrained from criticising Amman for giving asylum on Aug. 10 to former Iraqi Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan, his brother and their two wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein.

At the weekend the Iraqi

authorities went still further.

"Iraq wants to preserve its relations with Jordan and hopes to develop and strengthen them to the greatest possible degree in all spheres," a government spokesman said Saturday after a cabinet meeting chaired by President Saddam to discuss Jordan.

"Any cooperation by Jordan with other Arab countries will not reduce Iraq's eagerness to strengthen its economic relations with Jordan," he added in a reference to the warming relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz told CNN in a televised interview Friday: "We still think of Jordan as a sister and neighbourly nation."

"We had and we still have good relations with this country and we would like to maintain those relations."

Food and medicine allowed into Iraq by the U.N. are transported via Jordan. Tanker trucks also take the Baghdad-Amman road to transport the 70,000 barrels of oil per day which Jordan receives from Iraq.

Iraqis wanting to travel abroad must travel the 1,000 kilometres by road to Amman to take a plane there, while travellers to Baghdad are also obliged to travel over land between the two capitals.

Jordan is one of the few Arab countries to grant entry visas to Iraqis, who have fled in their thousands to Amman to escape the catastrophic economic situation in their own country caused by five years of sanctions.



His Majesty King Hussein on Monday presents a medal to Air Force Captain Mohammad Fuad Jilali (Petra photo)

Air force officer honoured for outstanding crew rescue effort

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday conferred on Air Force Captain Mohammad Fuad Jilali the Al Hussein Golden Medal in recognition of his successful efforts in rescuing the two pilots of an army helicopter which

crashed last week.

Also on Monday, King Hussein, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, visited the headquarters of the Hamzeh Ben Abdul Mutaleb Brigade.

They listened to a briefing on the unit's tasks. Later they were accompanied by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and His Royal Highness Prince Hamzeh Ben Al Hussein on an inspection visit to the brigade and watched the troops presenting a performance to mark the King's visit.

Effort for reconciliation bearing fruit, Sharif Zeid tells Senate

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Monday stressed Jordan's stand vis-a-vis Iraq and said there are clear and encouraging signs that Jordan's diplomacy will help seal Arab reconciliation, the speaker of the Upper House of Parliament (Senate) reported.

In a meeting with members of the Senate on the latest developments, the prime minister reaffirmed Jordan's policy of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. Speaker Ahmad Lawzi said.

Speaking to the press

shortly after the session, Mr. Lawzi said Jordan insists on an end of the economic embargo imposed on Iraq since 1990 and seeks at the same time to enhance Arab relations to achieve Arab reconciliation and solidarity.

"Jordan stands firm on its policy of non-interference in the internal policies of Arab countries. The policy not only applies to Iraq, but also to Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and all neighbouring Arab countries," Mr. Lawzi quoted Sharif Zeid as saying.

"Jordan, its government and people, would not accept other countries to meddle in its affairs."

Jordan is keen on restoring Arab solidarity... Jordan's diplomacy will have an effective role in sealing reconciliation," Sharif Zeid told the Senate, according to Mr. Lawzi.

The meeting, Mr. Lawzi said, also focused on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit scheduled to be held in Amman in October and ways of making this summit successful.

He said the package of economic laws — mainly the income tax law, the sales tax law and the encouragement of investment law, which are being reviewed by the Lower House's Financial Committee — are of paramount importance to the success of the summit.

Hundreds missing in Moroccan floods

RABAT (R) — Moroccan rescue workers were wading in the mud for the fourth day on Monday in a search for hundreds of people believed still missing in the Atlas Mountains after floods which killed at least 141 people, newspapers reported.

The opposition newspaper L'Opinion, whose reporter was among those who survived the disaster touched off by a freak rainstorm on Thursday night, said local authorities told him up to 1,500 people were still missing.

Other newspapers said 500 people were still unaccounted for after what has been described as the worst flood in more than 50 years hit the region around Marrakesh, 330 from Rabat.

The Interior Ministry, which is overseeing the rescue operation, confirmed there were still some people missing in the worst hit region of Al Haouz but declined to give a number. A spokeswoman said some figures in newspapers were exaggerated.

She said the official toll was still at 141 dead.

One opposition newspaper Al Alam, reported that 230 people had died and 500 were missing. Of the dead, 166 lost their lives in the worst-affected of Ourika, 35 kilometres south of Marrakesh, the paper said.

Officials said the morgue in Marrakesh was full to overflowing as another 10 bodies were brought in Sunday and alternative arrangements were being made to accommodate the dead.

An official who requested anonymity said an additional 30 bodies had not been included in the official toll as they were so badly mutilated by waterfalls, mud and falling rocks that they had not yet been identified.

The official also said 60 more people had already been buried.

Barzan Takriti said to have defected over Watban attack

By Randa Habib
Agency France Presse

AMMAN — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein lost the backing of another key family member when his half-brother, ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, threw his support behind toppling the Baghdad government, sources said Monday.

Barzan Ibrahim Takriti has refused to return to Baghdad from Geneva and has given his support to President Saddam's son-in-law, another senior official who defected to Jordan, sources close to the ambassador said Monday.

Former Industry Minister General Hussein Kamel Hassan defected to Amman Aug. 8 with his brother and their wives, both daughters of President Saddam. Several days later Gen. Hassan called for the president's overthrow.

As one more close family member appeared to defect, Iraqi sources said President Saddam has prevented all government officials and workers from leaving the country without "presidential authorization."

Barzan Takriti broke ties with the Iraqi president because of an incident involving his brother, Watban Takriti, who was reportedly shot in the leg by President Saddam's oldest son Uday during a family dispute a few weeks ago, the sources said.

Iraqi Television broadcast a hospital interview on Sunday with Watban, who is also

president Saddam's half-brother.

Watban, who had an apparent bullet wound in his leg, said he was accidentally injured, along with two other people, when guns were fired to celebrate a marriage about two weeks earlier.

Barzan Takriti, who went to Geneva in February 1989, was responsible for managing Iraqi investments and financial affairs.

Rumours have circulated for several months of bad blood between him and President Saddam, even though his daughter is married to the president's son Uday.

President Saddam's new travel restrictions have been relayed to officials at the Iraq-Jordan border post at Trebil, the Iraqi sources said.

Travellers coming from Iraq also said six checkpoints, including barriers, have been erected along the 650-kilometre road between Baghdad and the Jordanian border.

"At each barrier, soldiers mark the names of all the travellers, the licence plate numbers of the vehicles and then pass them along to the next checkpoint," one of the travellers said.

Security measures have also been beefed up on the two sides of the Jordan-Iraq border and "the searches are much more meticulous than before Hassan's defection."

Six of Gen. Hassan's associates were arrested along with the large number of officers who were known

to be close to him.

"All the belongings, companies and stocks of General Hassan were seized by Iraqi authorities,"

Meanwhile, Gen. Hassan's father, Kamel Hassan, died Thursday in Iraq from a heart attack, Iraqi sources told AFP.

Kamel Hassan died at the Takriti hospital, north of Baghdad, where he had been taken after complaining of heart problems, the sources said.

"The general's father was very upset by the defection of his two sons... as well as the arrest of two other of his sons in Iraq, including Hakim Kamel Hassan," the sources, close to the Hassan family, added.

Iraq published a list of six traitors on Thursday, including Hakim Kamel Hassan, calling on anyone who knew the individuals to turn themselves in to the authorities.

The authorities are searching for another advisor and relative of President Saddam who has fled Baghdad, the opposition, Iraqi National Congress (INC) said.

Authorities are "looking everywhere" for Hashem Hassan Al Majid, brother of former Defence Minister Ali Hassan Al Majid who was fired in May, "to arrest him and prevent him from leaving Iraq," the INC said.

Hashem Hassan, is an advisor to the president for Iraqi people's organisations, the London-based opposition group said in a statement received in Dubai.

Algerian journalist shot dead in spiralling militant violence

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A journalist with the daily paper to Malin died Monday of injuries he sustained in a terrorist attack on the outskirts of Algiers, his employer announced.

Ameur Ouagueni, 36, was shot Sunday evening in the Scala district at El Biar, the security services had earlier said.

He was head of Le Matin's international section.

His killing brought to 38 the number of journalists assassinated by fundamentalist groups in Algeria since May 1993. The victims include the publisher of Le Matin, Said Mekbel, who was killed in 1994 while having lunch in a restaurant near his office.

Two additional journalists

kidnapped several weeks ago are still missing.

A former leader of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most radical of Algeria's extremist factions, had vowed to kill "by the sword" those who fight "by the pen."

In other developments Monday, two local newspapers reported that a top rebel leader was killed by security forces in the Sidi Moussa region on Aug. 13.

Achour Touali, 35, former assistant to Abdelkader Cheboul, head of the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA) was killed with several members of his group in their hide-out, the papers reported.

Touali was part of the first Islamist underground move-

ment organised by Mustapha Bonyali, who was killed in 1987.

Algeria said five suspected Muslim guerrillas were killed near Algiers when a homemade bomb one of them carried accidentally exploded.

Algerian security officials also said guerrillas shot dead a 23-year-old preacher in an Algiers mosque on Sunday and that 47 militants were killed by government forces over the past week, the official Algerian news agency (APS) reported.

One of the five would-be bombers was blown to pieces and another's head was severed when the bomb exploded in Boufarik, a town 30 kilometres southwest of Algiers, said a statement by security services.

Police see French link to Paris bomb

PARIS (R) — Police believe Algerian Muslim extremists may have recruited disgruntled French youths of North African origin to stage last week's bomb attack in central Paris which wounded 17 people, a press report said on Monday.

The popular daily France-Soir, quoting investigators, said two suspects sought by police for the bombing, near the Arc de Triomphe, were younger than other men wanted in connection with two other attacks in Paris last month.

A bomb killed seven people in a commuter train in central Paris on July 25, two weeks after Abdul Hakim Sahraoui, a popular Algerian Muslim cleric who had been threatened by extremists, was shot dead at his Paris mosque.

Investigators favour the theory that a single Algerian extremist group was behind the three attacks.

France-Soir said a single commando coming from abroad could have shot Sahraoui and bombed the commuter train before handing over to another commando recruited in the Paris region.

Press reports have said the gas canister which blasted the train had been bought in Belgium but the bullets used to kill Sahraoui had been bought near Paris, brightening a possible French connection.

A key eyewitness who saw two men stuffing a package into a dustbin shortly before it exploded last Thursday near the Arc de Triomphe said they were in their 20s —

younger than the men sought for the two other attacks.

In telephone calls to RTL radio, a man purporting to speak for the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) general command had claimed responsibility for both bombings, in which similar devices were used.

The caller denounced the French government's alleged support for Algeria's military government in its fight against Muslim fundamentalist rebels. The GIA is the most violent Algerian rebel group.

A police spokesman declined to comment on the France-Soir report, which would confirm France's worst fears that Algerian strife could spread to its four-million-strong Muslim community.

Human rights organisations have warned that youths of North African descent, disgruntled by acute unemployment and a grim life in drab suburbs, were easy prey for extremists.

French police have recently cracked down on suspected Algerian fundamentalist sympathisers, detaining more than 100 people in a swoop on Paris suburbs in June. They had seized weapons in an earlier swoop late last year.

Yet videotapes explaining how to make gas canister bombs such as those used in the Paris attacks and in bombings in Algeria have been circulating recently among Muslim militants in the Paris region.

'Iran may consider renewing U.S. ties'

NICOSIA (AP) — Tehran would consider renewing relations with the United States if Washington made up for "its past animosity," a senior Iranian diplomat was quoted Monday as saying.

But Hussein Musavian, Iran's ambassador to Germany, told Tehran's Iran English-language daily that "the final decision... will be taken by the eminent leadership whom we all follow and will continue to do so."

He was referring to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Islamic republic's supreme leader and a hardliner on relations with Washington.

Mr. Musavian's comments did not appear to break new ground on the possibility of Iran and the United States normalising relations, severed by the Carter administration April 9, 1980.

Iran has repeatedly said relations cannot be restored until the United States releases Iranian assets worth between \$9 billion and \$12 billion in November 1979 after the U.S. embassy in Tehran was stormed and diplomats held hostage, and halts its political and economic campaigns against Tehran.

But Mr. Musavian's comments came as Iran grapples with a U.S. trade embargo imposed in June by the Clinton administration, which is engaged in a policy of "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq, which are considered hostile to the United States.

The Americans seek to force Iran to abandon its alleged nuclear weapons

programme and stop sponsoring international terrorism.

Mr. Musavian noted that there are two extremist blocs in Tehran on the issue of relations with the United States.

"One group acts as though the United States and its administration are illegitimate and believes that under no circumstances can relations be established with such a country," he said in comments also carried by the Islamic Republic News Agency, which is monitored in Cyprus.

At the other end of the spectrum, there is a faction which seeks the immediate restoration of relations, a move that it is convinced will instantly solve all Iran's domestic and foreign problems, Mr. Musavian noted.

"I believe that both groups are mistaken," he said. "Relations with the United States depend on Washington's approach towards Iran."

So far, the Americans have shown "animosity and hostility" towards the Islamic republic and while that policy prevails it is not in Tehran's interest to renew relations with Washington, he added.

"We have never seen any goodwill from the United States," Mr. Musavian stressed.

"But if the U.S. changes its approach and decides to make up for its past animosity and ill will and proves it in practice, then Tehran will be able to reconsider the establishment of ties with Washington."

Residents refuse to move for \$1.4 b subway project

Residents refuse to move for \$1.4 b subway project

BEIJING (AFP) — Many residents in Guangzhou are refusing to move to make way for the southern Chinese city's new subway, causing serious delays in the 12 billion yuan (\$1.4 billion) project, a report said Monday. "Unexpected difficulty in the relocations has delayed this year's construction work," the China Daily quoted Li Zili, mayor of the capital of Guangdong province, as saying. Many residents, particularly old people, are reluctant to move from their homes, despite government offers of good housing with convenient access to the subway, the report said. Nearly 100,000 Guangzhou residents are to be resettled from the area of the project, the newspaper reported, quoting Li as saying that the work was "fundamental for completing the subway by the year 1998." By June, only one third of the phase-one construction had been completed, the report said, citing local officials as promising to be back on schedule by the end of the year. Some 6,000 houses in the phase-one zone have been demolished and 1,000 more households signed contracts recently with the local government to move next spring, it said, adding that more than 2.6 billion yuan had so far been spent on relocation and building new apartments. Serious funding shortages are another factor threatening the project, according to a recent report, which said the Chinese government would issue bonds to overcome the problem.

'Count Porno' to stand for Free Democrats

BONN (AFP) — The Free Democratic Party (FDP) has entered a candidate for Munich city elections next year who is better known for steamy cinema roles than for his political talents, the Express newspaper reported Monday. The Italian Rinaldo Talamonti, 43, the paper recalled, starred in such works as "Count Porno Blows the Bugle," "Dr. Slapentickel and his Playmates" and "The Love-Struck Craftsman." From 1969 to 1978, he was Germany's busiest actor in erotic films, before becoming a shoe-seller and then an innkeeper. Soft-porn comic films are a Bavarian specialty. Former Miss Germany Dagmar Wochel ("Whee Chastity Belts Jingle in the Night"), is today a member of parliament for the very conservative Christian Social Union.

Sydney experiences longest dry spell in 137 years

SYDNEY (AFP) — Weather experts said Sydney broke a 137-year-old record Monday when rain failed to fall for the 35th consecutive day over the eastern Australian city. The Bureau of Meteorology said bouts of prolonged dryness were common in Sydney winters but this was the longest period without rain since records were first kept in 1858. The dry weather was caused by high pressure systems in the centre of the continent moving north and driving westerly winds towards the coast, said a bureau spokesman. The government of the eastern state of New South Wales, of which Sydney is the capital, said it may step up restrictions on water use if levels in the city's dams continued to drop. Sydney residents are already banned from using water from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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